



AUDIT OF

DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY SERVICES

(Including the Headquarters Library (SXKL) and Mission Libraries)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Library Services Audit focused on management framework issues at Headquarters, and relationships with mission libraries.

SXKL continues to be the library of Canada's foreign and international trade ministries, and as such has a clientele that can be considered both specialized and targeted. Its clients are specialized in that their information requirements relate to the business lines of both departments, and targeted because both departments take active steps to ensure that clients are well informed on matters relating to departmental interests. Such clients are either (a) internal - employees in Ottawa (ITCan and FAC), and at missions (ITCan, FAC and PIMs), or (b) external - e.g. academics, journalists, foreign government officials abroad, foreign missions in Canada, other libraries and students. SXKL's challenges relate to its ability to meet the expanding and changing needs of this diverse, widely disbursed and knowledge-oriented clientele.

SXKL's ability to continue developing and improving its services to clients would benefit from the following improvements:

- A formal mandate, role, or vision statement that defines SXKL's services and identifies its clients at Headquarters and at missions should be articulated and used as a basis for future service delivery. Such a statement should include relationships with missions (including mission libraries and information centres), and the provision of professional research and reference services.
- The four mission library audits conducted to date (Mexico, Paris, New York and Tokyo) reveal that internal clients' information needs from external (including host country and local) sources are generally not being addressed. With the exception of New York, mission libraries are primarily devoted to delivering the Public Affairs program abroad to local external clients. Internal clients (mission staff) generally rely on their own initiative in addressing their needs for external information. SXKL has a major role to play in improving the access of mission staff to such information.
- With the exception of its current outreach activity, SXKL's services to mission libraries and information centres have been provided by mission invitation only. SXKL's relationship with mission libraries and information centres should be formalized and reflected in SXKL's role or mission statement.
- The key elements of SXKL's management framework should be defined and established formally. Statistics are being gathered by the Library without the benefit of clear linkages to objectives and performance indicators.

- Service delivery would benefit from structured strategies for improvement based on client feedback information. SXKL's Client Survey of 1999 positioned the Library well in comparison with other OGD libraries and led to the establishment of the Portfolio Librarian positions in December 1999. Accordingly, SXKL's ongoing process of gathering client feedback should be formalized so that improvements are part of the regular renewal of products and services.
- Information relating to the management and acquisition of electronic data and information sources across the Department could be improved. While purchasing decisions are made on a basis of individual assessments, which include analysis of usage data, no documentation was found that rationalizes purchases of electronic information sources in relation to the overall portfolio of data sources provided on the Virtual Library. Although an inventory of external sources of electronic information holdings within the former DFAIT was not conducted during the course of the audit, there were indications that savings and increased access to sources could be achieved by a comprehensive approach to acquiring expensive electronic sources.

Increasing demands to use library office space in Headquarters and at missions for other purposes are aggravated by a growing perception that libraries are inevitably moving to electronic-only service. This perception leads to the unfortunate conclusion that there should be less need for space to shelve hard copy document collections. In many instances, hard-copy is the only official or legal version. Similarly, many historical and specialized collections only exist in hard copy form. Traditionally, at Headquarters and missions, libraries have not been successful in justifying their use of office space and facilities, because they lack the client usage data linked to role and mandate that would be produced by a properly functioning management framework.

Knowledge management is an evolving process within the two departments. SXKL's professional librarians are already acting as knowledge brokers, in the sense of connecting knowledge needs with knowledge sources. SXKL is well-positioned to act in such a role, given its existing client service orientation, knowledge of information tools and sources, and widespread contacts throughout the departments. Knowledge management within the departments would be augmented significantly by linking SXKL's proposed new mandate to the evolving knowledge management activities within the two departments.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

The objective of the audit is to advise management on the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of departmental library services, management practices, policies and controls. The audit focussed on the management of library products and services, and issues affecting the service delivery framework at headquarters and at missions abroad. It included the extent to which management is addressing key risks and challenges, and structuring itself to meet the needs of its clients. The interests of clients, especially departmental staff regardless of their location, were taken into account.

SCOPE AND APPROACH

The audit of the Headquarters Library Services (SXKL) was conducted over the period December 2002 - February 2003, by a team from Consulting and Audit Canada. Four mission libraries were audited in conjunction with the Audit Division's (SIV's) regular mission audits. An SXKL team working closely with the SIV auditors visited Mexico, Paris, New York and Tokyo. The London Library was visited for liaison and comparison purposes following the Paris audit. The mission library audit reports are attached in Appendix A.

This audit was approved by the DFAIT Audit and Evaluation Committee on March 5, 2002, as part of the Audit Division's 2002 - 2003 Annual Plan. Terms of Reference were approved by the Director of the Client Services Division (SXC), to whom the Headquarters Library (SXCI) then reported. The Headquarters Library Services (SXKL) now reports to the Director of the Knowledge and Information Management Division (S XK). The audit's lines of enquiry are as follows:

- Efficiency and effectiveness of the management framework and practices;
- Effectiveness of the current service delivery model in meeting client needs, and,
- Adequacy of information for decision-making including the management and acquisition of electronic information sources across the Department.

The methodology involved interviews with library managers, review and testing of business processes, analysis of statistical data, and review of internal documents and reports, and visiting mission libraries. For benchmarking purposes, librarians from three federal government department libraries were interviewed and relevant documentation reviewed, i.e. Canadian International Development Agency; Public Works and Government Services Canada; and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Owing to time and resource constraints, an inventory of external sources of electronic information holdings within the former DFAIT was not conducted during the course of the audit.

As part of this audit SIV conducted a staff survey in order to address SXKL human resources and physical work environment issues related to the future direction of library services in the two departments. The results of the survey were based on interviews with all staff in SXKL, and an action plan keyed to the audit results has been developed by management to address the issues raised by the staff.

LIBRARY SERVICES AT HEADQUARTERS

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The origins of the Headquarters library can be traced back to the establishment of the then Department of External Affairs in 1909. At that time departmental management strongly believed that a sophisticated and extensive reference collection was required in order for the Department to conduct its affairs. It was not until 1914 that the library was given a designated area, and in 1928, the first full-time librarian was hired.

1.1.2 At present, the main library operates with 25 positions (21 filled), and holds a vast collection of printed material and electronic databases. SXKL has approximately 40,000 walk-in clients a year at Headquarters, and 132,000 hits a year to its Virtual Library. Libraries at Headquarters and at certain missions provide a wide array of services to clients, making information available in traditional and electronic form. In November 1999, SXKL estimated the value of the Headquarters collection at approximately \$39 million.

1.1.3 SXKL provides three main groups of services, based largely on the nature of the interaction with clients:

1. **Identification, accession, development and maintenance of information sources and tools** in all forms. Included are hard copy and electronic collections, the Automated Library System (including the cataloguing, acquisitions and circulation modules), data bases (e.g. Virtual Library), web sites, search engines, etc. Client interaction is focussed on developing knowledge of their needs, mainly through the Reference/Portfolio/Circulation functions, or through discussing specific requirements with clients (e.g. CFSL, and focus groups for acquisition of new data bases). These services build the information infrastructure.
2. **Advice and guidance to clients undertaking their own information activities.** Included are all forms of client coaching, collection access, outreach activity, training (e.g. the Internet course) and individual methodology development. Clients find that it is one thing to have access to electronic data sources, and quite another to be able to use them effectively. Also included are information audits, special advice and assistance requests from missions (e.g. the Atlanta trade information centre), and working with mission librarians and other information professionals who in turn help their own clients. Client interaction is essentially counselling, aimed at improving their knowledge of the infrastructure. Once properly set up, they carry on by themselves. These

services help clients use the information infrastructure to meet their own needs.

3. **Provision of specific information services to clients.** Included are all services that completely satisfy a client request for information, ranging from a loan of a book to a complex research and reference project. Client interaction is focused on responding to specific enquiries, and obtaining feedback on relevance of the information provided and satisfaction with the service. In these services library staff (professional, technical, support) access the information infrastructure in its myriad forms (i.e. provide research and reference services) on behalf of clients.

1.1.4 The foregoing information services apply to both the newer electronic infrastructure and the traditional hard form infrastructure (e.g. paper, film, sound recordings). For example with respect to the latter, the UN Documents collection is maintained in printed form, and is frequently accessed. SXKL is also a Depository Library for Canadian government publications under the Depository Services Program of Communications Canada. As such, depository libraries are obliged to provide a basic level of public access to the publications selected for retention. In terms of service improvement, the Library introduced its new Portfolio Reference Service in December 1999. This Service, which was designed to address some of the issues identified in the internal client survey carried out earlier that year, consists of five portfolios that reflect departmental business lines and geographic locations. Portfolio reference librarians provide a blend of all three of the above services at the professional level, although their focus is on direct client services.

1.1.5 The growth of electronic information has had a significant impact on the landscape of the Library and its collection. Along with the many advantages of information technology, new challenges have emerged such as high acquisition costs, limitations of licencing agreements, and a broad range of information sources which must be evaluated for quality and relevance. Accordingly, SXK management intends to improve employee awareness of the array of Library services available to clients, and to ensure that library facilities and services are developed and utilized to their full extent. Of even greater importance, management would like assurances that they are meeting their clients' information needs, and that library services are being delivered in the most cost-effective manner.

1.1.6 As part of its outreach activities, SXKL held two conferences in Ottawa in February 2002 and December 2002 for mission librarians and mission information centre managers and other information professionals. These week-long events provided opportunities to share experiences, learn of the latest developments, and share best practices.

1.1.7 The Headquarters Library has not been audited previously. In 1983, a Program Evaluation Assessment was carried out by DFAIT Evaluators, but there is no

evidence that the recommendations in its Report of September 1983 were ever implemented. Twenty years later, the 1983 Assessment's main recommendations (the need for a specific Library policy, an enhanced mandate for the Library, and more active marketing of library services) are still valid, and are among the principal issues addressed in this report. In the staff survey, Library staff raised these same issues as being important to them.

1.2 Mandate, Management Framework and Practices

1.2.1 A common theme identified is that benefits in efficiency and effectiveness could be achieved through the articulation of a formal mandate, role or vision statement, and formal definition and implementation of the key elements of SXKL's management framework that are currently conducted informally. The mandate or vision for the Library should focus on formalizing its basic *raison d'être*, define services and identify clients, and be used as a basis for future service delivery. As described in Section 1.6, such a statement should include relationships with missions (including mission libraries and information centres), and the provision of professional research and reference services. While Recommendation 1.6.6 provides for additional emphasis on these latter two mandate issues, Recommendation 1.2.5 below brings together all the issues related to mandate into a single general recommendation.

1.2.2 The three OGD (other government department) libraries have an annual plan upon which are based accountability mechanisms for individual members of their libraries' management teams. In contrast, the closest formal planning document relating to SXKL's interests was the 1999 DFAIT Information Management Strategic Plan, which did not make specific reference to the Library.

1.2.3 Accountability mechanisms, such as management accords, monthly written status reports for ongoing and special activities, and regular meetings, are used in the OGD libraries to ensure key commitments are fulfilled. While SXKL's management team does hold regular meetings to discuss and resolve key issues, there is little evidence of formally established and documented processes. Such processes are a precursor to effective measurement, which then leads to successful management.

1.2.4 Statistics are being gathered by the Library without the benefit of clear linkages to objectives and key performance indicators. In addition, evidence of usage of these statistics for decision-making was not identified. One OGD library studied its performance indicators to ensure their relevance for management purposes, as well as to ensure that their measurement process did not create unnecessary work. Improved SXKL practices regarding statistical data linked to objectives and the related performance measures could also serve as a useful model for mission libraries' statistical activities.

Recommendations for SXKL

- 1.2.5** **Articulate a formal mandate, role, or vision statement that defines services and identifies clients, including relationships with mission libraries and information centres, and the provision of professional research and reference services.**

- 1.2.6** **Formalize the key elements of the management framework, including the implementation of a formal annual planning process that links SXKL's mandate to a set of operational objectives. Planned results and performance measurement indicators should, in turn, be reflected in management accords, and performance appraisals for the SXKL Management Team.**

- 1.2.7** **Establish an accountability framework for SXKL so that staff can know precisely what is expected of them. This would include the creation of management accords and the related status reporting and other internal and SxD accountability processes.**

- 1.2.8** **Establish a formal set of performance measures for key areas of operations, with baseline standards. These should be developed with the involvement of key stakeholders. The results of this exercise in Headquarters should be made available as a model for use in mission libraries and information centres.**

SXKL Actions and Time Frames

- 1.2.5** **SXKL is in the process of developing a Vision statement for the Library that will define Library services and strategic planning up to 2008. A draft is to be presented to SXK for approval by October 2004. The approved Vision will be used to formalize the management framework. To be completed by the end of FY 2004/05.**

- 1.2.6** **The planning process will be formalized and linked to performance measurement and staff development needs. To be completed by the end of FY 2004/05.**

- 1.2.7** **Completed.**

- 1.2.8** **A draft set of performance measures for all key areas, also for use by missions, will be prepared by the end of FY 2004/05. SXKL will continue to collect direct evidence of client satisfaction. A formal client survey will be considered for FY 2005/06**

1.3 Service Delivery Framework

1.3.1 SXKL continues to be the library of Canada's foreign and international trade ministries, and as such has a clientele that can be considered both specialized and targeted. Its clients are specialized in that their information requirements relate to the business lines of both departments, and targeted because both departments take active steps to ensure that clients are well informed on matters relating to departmental interests. Such clients are either (a) internal - employees in Ottawa (ITCan and FAC), and at missions (ITCan, FAC and PIMs¹), or (b) external - e.g. academics, journalists, foreign government officials abroad, foreign missions in Canada, other libraries and students. SXKL's challenges relate to its ability to meet the expanding and changing needs of this diverse, widely disbursed and knowledge-oriented clientele.

1.3.2 While the response to its internal Client Survey in 1999 has positioned the Library advantageously in comparison with the OGD libraries, opportunities for improvement have been found in terms of the effectiveness of the SXKL's array of services to clients (the "service delivery framework").

1.3.3 The Library has the benefit of several channels through which clients can provide feedback, e.g. client surveys, information audits, and various types of consultation with clients in Headquarters and at missions. While information is being collected on client needs and preferences, there is little evidence of structured use of this information to make changes to the Library's service delivery framework.

1.3.4 A formal action plan to provide a structured approach to dealing with the issues identified in the 1999 Client Survey was not identified. The most relevant document was an SXCI Project List stemming from the Survey, dated September 2000, and updated in February 2003. There is no evidence of regular follow-up activity demonstrating that information gathered from clients is consistently used to drive change initiatives and related internal accountabilities.

1.3.5 The Survey did nevertheless generate a number of significant service improvements to SXKL's array of professional library services, such as implementing the Portfolio Reference Service to improve the alignment of its research and reference capabilities to departmental needs, increasing coaching and training activities, updating and expanding the Library web site, and convening the two conferences in Headquarters of mission librarians and information specialists referred to earlier.

¹ PIMs - Partners in Missions, i.e. staff of other government departments assigned to missions, including CIC, CIDA, DND, RCMP, etc.

Recommendations for SXKL

- 1.3.6** Reassess, update and formalize the process of gathering client needs information at Headquarters and at missions. The results of this reassessment should be linked to the performance measurement process and used as input to SXKL's planning and decision-making process.
- 1.3.7** Develop a service improvement action plan to ensure that SXKL's service delivery framework is accurately focused on the needs of its clients regardless of their location. The action plan would be the basis for regular follow-up activity.

SXKL Actions and Time Frames

- 1.3.6** SXKL will formalize its ongoing process of linking client information needs to performance measures and strategic planning, including reports on major trends that will impact on future library services. To be completed by FY 2005/06.
- 1.3.7** A service improvement action plan, incorporating information assessments with client feedback loops, will be developed in conjunction with Recommendation 1.3.5 by FY 2005/06.

1.4 Controls to Safeguard Assets

1.4.1 There are opportunities for improving SXKL's procedures and facilities for safeguarding library assets that would be useful both at Headquarters and at missions. Although no previous security review specific to the Library was identified, security provided by Commissionaire services appeared satisfactory with respect to access control to the main Library, the Legal Library, the Léger Collection, and the Library's administrative area and circulation processes. Access control in mission libraries and information centres is governed by the procedures in place for public access control by the relevant mission.

1.4.2 As Library management has rated the overall risk to its holdings as low, (with the possible exception of water damage caused by fire sprinklers), security-related statistics are not being compiled. Hard copy documents, however, are electronically tagged. Control over the collections could be enhanced by the collection and assessment of security-related information (e.g., missing items and their causes), as well as by the development of an assessment guide for Library security for use at Headquarters, and eventually as a self-assessment guide for use in mission library and information centre locations. The guide would identify the security-related facilities, procedures and layouts that should be in place, and what information should be

captured and reported. This is particularly relevant for mission libraries where members of the local public have access to terminals and collections, either by appointment or on a walk-in basis. For example, SIGNET screens and keyboards should not be visible to members of the public. The risk situation faced by mission collections and facilities may not be the same as that in Headquarters. Based on its familiarity with mission library arrangements, SXKL is in a good position to develop a self-assessment guide, or template, that missions can use to identify potential library vulnerabilities. Departmental physical and electronic security authorities should be consulted in its development.

1.4.3 Increasing demands on space within the L.B. Pearson Building have been realized through the loss of Library space to Team Canada Inc, the SIGNET Walk-in Centre and the absorption of the Legal Library. As well, there is a growing perception by many that libraries are inevitably moving to electronic-only service. As such their needs for space would reduce to that required for desktop operation. Unfortunately, information that is not digitized is not available electronically. If the needs of targeted clients are for information that exists only in printed form, then libraries will have to maintain and provide access to traditional collections.

1.4.4 Another perception about libraries which has been mentioned during the course of the audit links the advent of the Internet with questions regarding the need for the existence of libraries at all. "If everything is available on the internet, who needs libraries?" Unfortunately, "everything" is not available on the Internet with respect to individuals with highly specialized information needs. The Internet has been compared to a landfill site - abundant trash with little of value, and that being difficult to find.

1.4.5 SXKL does effectively manage its space, as demonstrated through the implementation of crush shelving in the basement of the L.B. Pearson Building, and the reassessment of its holdings and assets when space has had to be given up. These successful adaptations could place the Library in a position in the future where more expropriation of office space is proposed based on past experience. A professional assessment of space utilization requirements for its various collections, services and facilities should be conducted in order to establish minimum space requirements. Based on the Headquarters experience, such space utilization standards could be developed in conjunction with SRD for use in missions that are experiencing similar space restriction problems.

Recommendations for SXKL

1.4.6 Develop a self-assessment guide for library security for use in Headquarters and at missions.

1.4.7 Develop minimum space requirement standards for library collections, client services and related tools and facilities, for use in Headquarters and at missions.

SXKL Actions and Time Frames

- 1.4.6 A formal security self-assessment guide will be developed by FY 2004/05.**
- 1.4.7 Minimum space requirement standards will be made available for use in Headquarters and at missions when obtained from Library and Archives Canada. Building floor loading specifications for library collections will be obtained from Public Works and Government Services Canada by FY 2004/05.**

1.5 Information for Decision-Making

1.5.1 SXKL consults with its clients through the Portfolio Reference Librarians to determine the need for specific information services, particularly with respect to electronic services, including the databases in the Virtual Library. No documentation was found, however, that rationalizes purchases of new electronic information sources in relation to the overall array of databases already in the Virtual Library. Products are evaluated, however, against other similar products already on the VL with regard to licencing costs, full or partial coverage of information, updating schedule (real time, weekly, monthly, etc.), and on client feedback during a trial period.

1.5.2 SXKL tracks usage of the various databases in the Virtual Library, and can decide to discontinue items that are not being used sufficiently to justify their cost. As a result, the content of the Virtual Library changes from time to time. Considering the magnitude of the investment already made in the Virtual Library's databases, the current informal assessment process should be upgraded and established on a more formal basis.

1.5.3 Interviews have identified that collections of electronic and hard copy reference material within Headquarters divisions and at some missions have resulted in the creation of a number of mini-libraries, where divisional and mission funds are increasingly being allocated not only for content, but also for related infrastructure. Justification for these mini-libraries is expressed in terms of the specialized nature of the information, and ease of access for the almost sole users of the information (e.g. the Dunn and Bradstreet database, to which the International Business Opportunity Centre (IBOC) at Headquarters subscribes). Mini-libraries are expensive to establish, and are also expensive to deconstruct when they have been deemed to have lost their usefulness. Materials have to be de-catalogued, subscriptions cancelled and hard copy collections distributed. Examples are Washington and New Delhi (see Paragraphs 2.1.3 and 2.1.4. While mini-libraries can work well in specific situations, i.e. IBOC, there are other instances where electronic information is being acquired without the Library's knowledge. These sources could be beneficial to more than just a select few

departmental employees, if there were an inventory of all electronic databases available across the two departments.

1.5.4 There could be significant department-wide savings, and increased access to key information, with a comprehensive departmental approach to the purchasing of electronic information sources. Indeed, implementation of such a process led to the creation of the Virtual Library in the first place. Funding, however, remains a problem. Where SXKL may not have funds to purchase a data source for general use, or share in its purchase, a division would have the funds to purchase one for divisional use. As mentioned in the Scope and Approach section, owing to time and resource constraints, an inventory of external sources of electronic information holdings within the former DFAIT was not conducted during the course of the audit.

1.5.5 SXKL conducts several information audits during the year to support Headquarters divisions in information identification, assessment and analysis. These information audits begin with detailed client consultations and provide much useful information, including the identification and evaluation of electronic information sources. Such audits should also be conducted at missions on a regular basis. Their benefit could be considerably enhanced if their results were compiled on a structured basis, analyzed, and made generally available as appropriate. In this context, the continued coincidence of SXKL teams visiting missions simultaneously with the SIV regular mission audits, following the pattern already established for the purposes of this audit, should be continued as appropriate for mutual benefit. Whether coincident with SIV mission audits or not, SXKL should include follow-up of previous mission library audit recommendations when it next visits the relevant missions.

1.5.6 Ensuring that a collection is up-to-date and of continuing relevance (e.g. by the removal (culling) of items from the Library's collection) is an activity that takes place only as time permits, as significant resources are required to de-catalogue and dispose of items. Usage and ongoing relevance of hard copy items are harder to track and assess than for electronic items. According to the Head Librarian, a collection usage study is being considered for the Headquarters Library for FY 2003-2004. The continued existence of collections that are demonstrably up-to-date and relevant to clients' needs should be a straightforward matter to justify. All departmental libraries have the same concerns with respect to collection development, maintenance and access. SXKL leadership in this area would be most useful to mission libraries and Headquarters divisions.

1.5.7 Managing knowledge as a corporate asset is still an evolving process in the two departments. SXKL is contributing to knowledge management functionality through its array of research and reference services and collections. The development of knowledge management strategies for both departments embracing both Headquarters and missions would help connect SXKL's activities to knowledge management needs and initiatives throughout the departments. By virtue of its ongoing contacts throughout Headquarters and at missions, SXKL is already well-positioned to

identify, co-ordinate and support the research and reference aspects of knowledge management in the departments. Although SXKL already carries out a wide variety of relevant and useful knowledge management activities, the results so far have not been brought together in unifying strategies and frameworks.

Recommendations for SXKL

- 1.5.8 Establish a formal process for assessing the relevance of Virtual Library content.**
- 1.5.9 Expand the current practice of conducting information audits to include missions, with appropriate linkages to the service delivery framework.**
- 1.5.10 Develop a collections development and usage strategy for SXKL, that could also serve as a model for the development of similar strategies for Headquarters divisions and missions.**
- 1.5.11 Identify, co-ordinate and support the research and reference aspects of the departments' evolving knowledge management strategy.**

SXKL Actions and Time Frames

- 1.5.8 The process for assessing the relevance of Virtual Library content will be formalized by FY 2004/05.**
- 1.5.9 The information audit process will be expanded to include missions, and linked to the service delivery framework, by FY 2005/06.**
- 1.5.10 The Library's current Collections Development Policy will be aligned with its approved vision and mandate, etc., and will be made available for consultation and use as applicable by missions, by FY 2005/06.**
- 1.5.11 This key concept will be incorporated as part of the proposed Vision statement, a draft of which is being prepared for submission to SXK by October 2004.**

1.6 A Functional Mandate for Research and Reference

1.6.1 Although SXKL has successfully undertaken the key initiatives described earlier, there exists the general lack of linked formality in its operations that has been highlighted in this report. SXKL has done excellent work as far as it has gone, which has placed it at the state of the art in some respects, in comparison to OGD library

activity. Nevertheless, the question of linked formality needs to be extended to SXKL's mandate, which also is a part of its management framework.

1.6.2 SXKL has unique challenges, given the global information concerns of its two departments, and that a significant proportion of its internal clients are located in 160 missions around the world. Mission clients and mission libraries in turn provide services to local external clients who have been targeted by one or more mission programs.

1.6.3 With the exception of its current outreach activity, SXKL's access to mission libraries and information centres has been by invitation only, and its service role to missions generally functions informally and mostly at client initiative. There is a need for the formal mandate or vision to cover both access to mission libraries and the provision of services to mission clients, especially research and reference. SXKL would then more readily be able to develop and improve services to missions (and Headquarters divisions) on its own initiative. Accordingly, the essence of such a formal functional mandate for SXKL would lie in extending and reinforcing the research and reference services it already provides to its identified clientele. Such a mandate would draw on the basic value-added of the professional librarian's research and reference skills, and build on a resource strength that SXKL already possesses. Based on the mission audits described in the next Chapter, Recommendation 2.4.4 provides for strengthening services to mission clients in the area of accessing information from local sources.

1.6.4 Some elements of a functional mandate are already in place, others are recommended in this report, but a formal functional role for mission library access and research and reference services and support will take some time to develop and mature. Client acceptance at missions and in Headquarters divisions would also be involved, whenever jurisdictional boundaries and other sensitivities are encountered. SXKL would always be on firm ground, however, with the provision of professional research and reference services effectively targeted and delivered.

1.6.5 In time, as SXKL continues to develop its management framework and improve services, tools and facilities, more and more of its best practices should become generally available to Headquarters divisions and missions. Being carefully attuned to client needs, SXKL should be able to establish a pattern of providing effective professional services and support activities to its clients.

Recommendation for SXKL

1.6.6 Ensure that SXKL's formal mandate or vision statement includes provision for delivery of professional research and reference services and relationships with missions (including mission libraries

and information centres), thereby enabling SXKL to improve and extend services to identified clientele on its own initiative.

SXKL Action and Time Frame

- 1.6.6 SXKL is in the process of augmenting its existing research and reference mandate and relationships with mission libraries by updating its alignment with departmental business lines and client needs, as part of its draft Vision statement, for submission to SXK by October 2004.**

LIBRARY SERVICES AT MISSIONS

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 It was clear from the outset that any review of departmental library services would have to include the mission libraries, in order to present a complete picture of departmental library activity. Indeed, the Director General of the Information Management and Technology Bureau (SXD) emphasized this point during the Audit and Evaluation Committee meeting of March 5, 2002, referred to earlier.

2.1.2 The audits of the individual mission libraries were conducted in conjunction with SIV's regular schedule of mission audits. The library audit team could thereby interact with the mission audit team on interrelated questions and issues as they arose during the audit visit.

2.1.3 Two professional librarians from SXKL (the Manager, Co-ordination and Development of Services, and the Manager, Information Evaluation) conducted the Mission library audits in accordance with a draft audit guide developed in consultation with the SIV Library Services audit team. The mission libraries visited were: Mexico, Paris, the New York Consulate General, and Tokyo. The audit reports are attached in Appendix A. The London Library was visited for liaison and comparison purposes following the Paris audit, but was not audited. The library in Washington was not included in this first round of visiting mission libraries. It was closed to the public by the Mission and its collection mostly disbursed during the Autumn of 2003. Renamed the "Embassy Research Centre", its focus has shifted from serving the general public to supporting mission programs with research services and web design and operations support. It retains its official depository status (on-line) for all Canadian government documents.

2.1.4 After the downsizings of mission libraries during the mid-1990s, these five libraries (including London) are virtually the only mission libraries in existence, although they are much smaller than they were originally. Globally, most missions closed their libraries outright, donated the collections to various organizations, and used the office space for other mission purposes. Apart from fiscal restraint, other reasons given for their demise were out-of-date and unused collections, the rise of the Internet and other electronic search tools and data bases, and the growing belief that all research, reference and enquiry activity could be done electronically, mostly without cost, and on the Internet. In spite of the downsizings, there are still holdings for over one hundred missions in the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), showing that many collections have increased in size in the last few years, as current counts indicate, e.g., Paris Cultural Centre (1985 - 9,202; 2003 - 20,249). Post 9/11, however, security has been heightened to the extent that many collections are not readily accessible to external clients, so new downsizings are re-appearing, e.g., New Delhi and Washington, as mentioned above.

2.2 Mission Audit Summaries

2.2.1 Following is a brief synopsis of the main points of the four mission library audit reports. Some notes from the London liaison and comparison visit are also included.

Mexico

2.2.2 The Library, located within the Mission, has a staff of three whose efforts are almost exclusively devoted to providing services to two groups of Mexican clients seeking information about Canada - the general public, and specialist groups, such as academics, government officials and journalists. Mission staff make little use of the library for their information needs, which centre mostly on information about Mexico, and on local Mexican issues. The library performs a number of services on behalf of the Mission of which managers are largely unaware, such as handling routine first-level public enquiries for many programs, regularly reviewing the Mission's website for dead links, and providing new relevant Internet links. The Mexico Library is also a Depository Library for Canadian government publications.

2.2.3 The issue of prime concern to the Mission is the office space occupied by the Library collection, furniture, and workstations. The audit showed that without affecting the functionality of the library, considerable floor space could be saved by culling outdated material (books, periodicals, etc.) from the collection, discarding unneeded furniture and reconfiguring the layout.

2.2.4 A series of recommendations aimed at improving services were made to Mission management in a draft SXKL report dated March 13, 2003 (see Appendix A). There was also a section on the Library in the SIV Mexico Mission draft audit report that was sent to the Mission on April 4, 2003. This section summarized the contents of the SXKL Report, and contained a recommendation that the Mission should implement the SXKL recommendations. Basically, library services need to be re-focused and upgraded so that the interests of the Mission's programs are better served. Statistical information, keyed to objectives, should be gathered on services provided, types of client, and sources consulted. This information should be capable of being aggregated so that trends can be monitored and requests profiled. In so doing, services, tools and collections can be improved or altered, and options justified. Recommendations were also raised on services, outreach and training that SXKL could provide from Headquarters.

Paris

2.2.5 The "Paris library" is the Documentation Centre that is housed within the Canadian Cultural Centre, located a short distance from the Embassy. The Documentation Centre was established to implement the provisions of the 1965 Cultural Agreement between Canada and France whereby each country would make their

books, periodicals and other publications available to each other's researchers. The Documentation Centre's clients are almost exclusively the French community and researchers who are seeking information about or doing research on Canada. It does on occasion provide "Canadian" information to Mission staff for speeches, and as biographical information for visits. Services are provided by two professional librarians. Being located in an annex separate from the Embassy, office space is not an issue.

2.2.6 There are 18 Canadian studies centres in France, and students and faculty of these centres form a large proportion of the Documentation Centre's clientele. Researchers from other European countries will also use the Documentation Centre's facilities. Clients used both the hard copy collection (50%) and the Internet (25%), dispelling the notion that "everything is available on the Internet". The Canadian collection does not circulate. Statistics are gathered but are not aggregated to produce trend information, and are not used for decision making as they have no relationship to plans and objectives. The Documentation Centre is a frequent user of the Headquarters Library (Portfolio Reference Service), the Library of Parliament and the National Library of Canada.

2.2.7 The information needs of internal clients in the Embassy are provided partially by two designated staff within the Embassy, one for media/political, and the other for business/trade. They also respond to enquiries about Canada from the French media and government officials. Their services are differentiated from the Documentation Centre based generally on client type. Otherwise, Embassy internal clients are served from within their own program areas either by use of the Virtual Library or with resources they have produced themselves.

2.2.8 A draft report with recommendations dated May 15, 2003 was forwarded to the Mission and the Documentation Centre on September 19, 2003. Briefly, increased awareness of the Documentation Centre's services on the part of Embassy staff would help to eliminate instances where the public is misdirected or turned away without being helped. In addition, awareness of what information services are being purchased within the Embassy would help the Documentation Centre maximize its purchasing power. The Centre should be informed when materials are being purchased or discarded, so that its clients could benefit. Recommendations were raised on improving co-ordination and co-operation with the Embassy, on improving services and statistical data gathering for use in decision making, and on additional services that SXKL could provide from Headquarters.

London

2.2.9 What was left of the Canada House Library when it re-opened in 1998 is now housed in a small room in the media centre containing mostly donated books (it has no budget). It is open only two-and-a-half days a week, and is maintained by a part-time, non-professional librarian. Other parts of the media centre in Canada House are open five full days a week, and have approximately 1,000 visitors per week. No

separate statistics are kept on use of the Library, or of services rendered. Space is an issue, as there is little room in the Library for clients to do research on site.

2.2.10 Before it was dismantled in 1994, the Canada House Library had an important research collection of Canadian in the UK, a full-time staff of two professional librarians, and a collection of 26,000 items, approximately. This collection was dispersed mostly to the University of London Library, and to other institutions in the UK. The reasons given for the dismantling and disbursement were (a) budgetary, (b) re-focussing of traditional Public Affairs activities into harder-edged advocacy activities driven by the bilateral agenda, and (c) other countries' foreign ministries were doing the same thing.

2.2.11 The Librarian uses the Virtual Library mostly for media products, and helps High Commission staff with their research, and in using the Virtual Library. There is no breakdown available on the proportion of services provided to internal clients as opposed to external clients, although the Library is part of the Public Affairs Section of the Mission. No draft report was sent to the Mission, as the London visit was not an SXKL audit.

New York Consulate General

2.2.12 The Research Centre is part of the Mission's Political and Economic Reporting and Public Affairs Program (PERPA), and is headed by a professional librarian and a research assistant. They provide highly rated services to internal clients who represent approximately three quarters of their total workload. In this aspect, New York is unique among the mission libraries visited. The remaining quarter of their workload is devoted to external clients, who are mostly media, business and financial institutions, academics, students and the general public. Ten years ago these proportions were reversed. The Research Centre is open to external clients in the afternoon by appointment.

2.2.13 Space is an issue and the Research Centre's hard copy collection has been downsized several times. It has been successful, however, in adapting its services to an electronic information environment, by moving from paper-based services to a wide range of new services:

- use of desktop tools, such as the Virtual Library and select databases;
- daily media monitoring delivered by e-mail to mission staff on a request basis; and,
- personalized assistance in setting up tailored alert and search strategies using the above desktop tools.

While the latter two services can be done by mission clients themselves, they appreciate the fact that the Research Centre staff can do this faster and more effectively, leaving them free to focus on other aspects of their duties. Nevertheless, the Research Centre has only just begun to record statistical data on its activities and clients, but there has been no aggregation of the data, no analysis of trends, and no linkage to mandate, plans or objectives. A draft audit report with recommendations dated July 25, 2003 was sent to the Mission on October 1, 2003. Recommendations are raised regarding closer alignment of Research Centre's services to mission clients' needs, improving services, setting service standards, data gathering and use, and integrating the Head Librarian into the Mission decision processes regarding the Research Centre's budget, collection size, office space, and tools purchase.

Tokyo

2.2.14 The E.H. Norman Library is part of the Mission's Communication and Culture Section, and staffed by a locally-engaged Head Librarian and a Circulation Clerk. Although experienced and capable, they are both non-professionals who have had no formal library training. Floor space is not an issue, although the Library's location in the basement tends to isolate it from the rest of the Mission. The Library houses the 'Study in Canada' section, where information is provided to prospective Japanese students about Canadian universities, colleges, and high schools. This section accounts for approximately 60% of the traffic to the Library, and 10 – 15% of the Library staff's time.

2.2.15 The Library collection consists of approximately 15,000 books in English, French and Japanese related to a wide range of Canadian and Japanese subjects, as well as newspapers, journals and government documents. It provides a depth of information that is not available through the Internet. The Canadiana collection is noted for being the largest resource for Canadian Studies in Japan, and as such is highly valued by the local Japanese Association for Canadian Studies (JACS), whose members (mostly university professors, graduate students, government officials, journalists and business people) represent a significant proportion of the Library's clientele. JACS is very active, and has four regional branches in Japan.

2.2.16 Six computers are available for patrons doing internet research on Canada. The Library Online Public Access Catalogue, which provides access to the bibliographic records for the holdings of all departmental libraries in Canada, is available through these terminals.

2.2.17 Library services to Mission staff are limited to routing periodicals, occasionally loaning materials, and ordering resources (e.g., periodicals, newspapers, books). Only limited reference services are provided to Mission staff on a regular basis, and there is a correspondingly limited demand for such services. Research and reference services to internal clients do not appear ever to have been part of the mandate of the Library.

2.2.18 The information centre concept is still evolving within the Mission, and some confusion exists regarding which group is to answer which type of enquiry for which client. Currently, centralized public enquiries are handled primarily by the Octel telephone system and the fourth floor reception desk, and secondarily by the Library and the new (Trade) Information Centre.

2.2.19 In general, the bulk of the Library's services (approximately 80 - 85%) are provided to external clients (mostly those of the Communications and Culture Section), and the balance to internal Mission clients.

2.2.20 A draft audit report dated February 26, 2004 containing a detailed series of recommendations was sent to the Mission on March 1, 2004. Recommendations for the Mission cover collection development and maintenance, marketing of Library services, expanded reference and coaching services to Mission staff, training for Library staff, review and co-ordination of media packs, co-ordination of centralized public folders, policy on Library role, mission, and service standards, and collection and use of client service data. Recommendations for Ottawa (SXKL) include provision of select Canadian electronic resources to mission libraries, development of a website discussion forum for Headquarters and mission librarians to share common issues and best practices, and computer-based distance training for interested Mission staff. These are in addition to the already-provided services of the annual Mission Library Conferences, Virtual Library training and area Portfolio Librarian support.

2.3 Conclusions from Mission Library Audits

2.3.1 Mission libraries are unique unto themselves, and are completely the "product" of the mission in which they are located. They are mostly governed by the needs of their missions' Public Affairs Program, and organizationally form part of it. They are staffed by their mission's locally-engaged employees, and their budget is part of their mission's budget. Although mission librarians are in frequent contact with their SXKL counterparts, SXKL has no functional role in their management.

2.3.2 Mission library services consist of providing the following types of information to three basic groups of clientele, i.e.:

- specifically focussed Canadian information to targeted or priority host country clients, e.g., academics, government officials, etc.;
- basic Canadian information to host country general public clients as a centralized enquiries function, e.g., students, prospective immigrants; and,
- specific host country and external sources information to internal mission clients.

2.3.3 The first two services generally dominate library staff time, and are devoted to two broad groups of Public Affairs' targeted clients, i.e. targeted high-level, and general public. They deliver various levels of "Canadiana" to the local population. The third service is provided to internal mission clients who are primarily General Relations, PERPA, and International Business Program staff who require host country and local issues information for analysis and reporting purposes. With the exception of New York, these clients are poorly served by their missions' libraries. In general, internal clients rely largely on their own initiative in addressing their needs for host country and local issues information.

2.3.4 Mission libraries are mainly delivering their missions' Public Affairs program abroad. They also provide a significant benefit to their missions in acting as a centralized focus and triage service for local public enquires, thus relieving mission programs of this activity. They have survived the downsizings of the 1990s by being useful to their missions.

2.3.5 The mix of the three basic services provided by a mission's library is almost entirely a function of the Public Affairs Program's interests and traditional practices. As a result, it is natural that the libraries are all located within the Public Affairs Program, as mentioned earlier, or else within a public affairs domain, e.g., the Paris Documentation Centre. As worthwhile as Public Affairs activities are, the needs of internal clients for externally-generated information are insufficiently addressed.

2.3.6 New York is an exception, as mentioned above. Its Research Centre's activities constitute the closest approximation to what was originally conceived to be a "mission library", i.e. providing research, reference and documentation services to internal mission clients. Nevertheless, it still forms part of the Public Affairs organization, as this was its original orientation.

2.3.7 Statistical information, if gathered at all, is done poorly and is not used for management or justification purposes.

2.3.8 Space for library collections, tools and activities is an issue, except for Paris. Overcrowding elsewhere in chanceries always sets up library space as a prime target for expropriation. Library staff traditionally have been poorly equipped to defend their space, as they lack the service transaction, target client and facility usage data to justify their use of their space.

2.3.9 Position classifications and core competencies for librarians and information personnel are issues. As mission libraries are one-off manifestations of their missions' organization structures, there is little commonality of competencies and classification levels. Questions arose on these topics during the audits. Mission librarians and information personnel meet each other periodically in conferences, and otherwise are in communication primarily on job related matters. They are well-informed of each other's levels of responsibility and position classifications.

2.3.10 SXXL listed a number of services it can provide to mission libraries, including development of a pilot project for providing access to select Canadian electronic resources for access by external clients. Similarly, an agreement for reciprocal exchange of access to select electronic databases with host country libraries would provide access to local databases for use by internal clients.

2.3.11 Library services, or “service transactions” can be thought of as any combination of the following factors:

- a **client** with an information need, e.g., self-selected members of the public, targeted high-profile host country contacts, mission officers with a report to complete, etc;
- an **information** transfer that (a) is in the mission’s interest to provide, and (b) meets the client’s needs. It could also be either a referral to a secondary source, or else instructions on how clients could locate the information for themselves. The information provided could be as simple as a one-page handout or a one-line web site address, or as complicated as research report that took days to compile; and,
- a **tool**, or source of the information provided, be it a hard copy yearbook, a sophisticated database, or a PC or kiosk terminal used by clients themselves.

2.3.12 Therefore any management of mission library services will have to be addressed in terms of the above three factors, i.e. who are the clients and how important are they to the mission, what information are they seeking, and is it in the missions’ (Department’s) interests that it be provided, and are the tools and sources in place to provide the information effectively? Finally, are library staff competencies commensurate with the level of service provided?

2.3.13 SXXL is in a position to advise on the foregoing questions, and has already done so on various occasions in the past at mission invitation.

2.4 Support for Mission Internal Clients and Mission Library Staff

2.4.1 From the mission library audits, the following salient points referred to earlier should be addressed by SXXL as part of its continuing focus on client need.

2.4.2 Mission internal clients generally find ways to access the information they need themselves, or within their respective programs, which may have retained their own information professionals, e.g., the Paris Embassy. Otherwise they will use the Internet, locally purchased data bases and sources, or SXXL’s facilities in Headquarters (e.g., the Portfolio Reference Service and the Virtual Library). SXXL needs to sharpen

its focus on helping internal mission clients meet their needs for host country (and accredited country) information on local issues and trends. SXKL librarians have already suggested the development of a pilot project for providing access to select Canadian electronic resources for access by external clients. This would include an agreement for reciprocal exchange of access to select electronic databases with host country libraries that would provide access to local databases for use by mission internal clients. Internal clients at Headquarters, especially geographic divisions, would also have an interest in such information.

2.4.3 The foregoing focus on internal clients and their needs is not intended to detract from the needs of external clients as targeted by the various mission programs, primarily Public Affairs. Although they are by definition different clients, and the information they seek (Canadiana) is generally different from that of internal clients, the tools and skills needed to provide both types of information will be the same or similar. Therefore, SXKL's advice on tools, skills and search methodology will be beneficial in providing services to all clients.

Recommendation for SXKL

2.4.4 As part of mission information audits (Recommendation 1.5.9), allocate specific priority to addressing mission internal clients' needs for external (including host country and local) information.

SXKL Action and Time Frame

2.4.4 SXKL will ensure that the needs of Mission staff for information from external sources are addressed. Means of so doing include content on the Virtual Library, VL training sessions, and recommendations to purchase/access external information sources. Subject to budget limitations, an updated process to be in place by FY 2005/06.

2.4.5 As has already been pointed out, SXKL provides guidance to locally engaged mission librarians and other information professional staff. Issues related to their classifications have been mentioned in Paragraph 2.3.9. The development of core competencies and benchmark job descriptions for the various levels of mission librarian and information professional positions should be undertaken by SXKL as part of its functional mandate. This would be a similar exercise to the ones carried out by the relevant authorities in Headquarters for locally-engaged Consular Officer and Assistant positions, and for the various levels of Systems Administrator positions. Such a project would be done in conjunction with the Locally-Engaged Human Resources Division (HRL) and mission managers.

Recommendation for SXKL

- 2.4.6** In conjunction with HRL and mission management, develop a range of core competencies and benchmark job descriptions for mission library staff.

SXKL Action and Time Frame

- 2.4.6** SXKL will propose a range of core competencies and benchmark job descriptions for missions to consider when staffing library positions. Drafts to be available by the end of FY 2004/05.

Appendix A

SXKL Mission Library Audit Reports

1. Mexico - March 13, 2003.
2. Paris - Canadian Cultural Centre - Documentation Centre - May 15, 2003
3. New York Consulate General - Research Centre - July 25, 2003
4. Tokyo - The E.H. Norman Library - February 26, 2004

Review of the Library – Canadian Embassy, Mexico

A review of library services at the mission library in Mexico was conducted between March 10 and March 14, 2003. This review was undertaken as part of an audit of the Canadian Embassy and Consulates in Mexico. Staff from a number of program areas were interviewed to obtain general feedback on perception and usage of the mission's library services. A previous review of the Embassy's information services was conducted in 1997 by the headquarters Library (reference "*Canadian Embassy Mexico: Review of Information Services*", October 1997).

The Library's mission statement (currently under review) as reformulated in 1990, states that "The Library in the Embassy of Canada, Mexico was founded in 1971 to provide reference service to the Mexican people on a wide variety of subjects concerning Canada, and equally important to ensure sound background information to support the Embassy programs. This statement still stands with a new emphasis. In 1990, with the expansion of Canada / Mexico bilateral relations on all fronts, and notably trade issues, the Library must ensure that both Embassy staff and the Mexican people have accurate information concerning Canadian commercial and economic affairs to fully support Canadian interests." In 2003, not only does this mandate still stand, but it should be added that the Library must assume a larger role to ensure that Embassy staff have access to accurate, timely and relevant information on Mexico.

The Library serves as an integral first point of contact for many visitors to the Embassy, whether on-site visitors or those accessing the mission website for information about Canada. Library staff is comprised of a head librarian, and two assistants (one half time). The Library has undergone several space reduction exercises over the years to accommodate program requirements. Further adjustments to the space allocation are planned and would afford an opportunity to streamline both the collection and service points.

General Observations and Recommendations:

It is generally agreed that the Library should serve three major purposes: providing information about Canada to Mexico; providing information about Mexico to mission staff; and serving a centralized public enquiries function. We feel that the functional role of the library could be enhanced to serve these purposes. The following observations and recommendations are grouped according to these three themes as well as library operations.

1. Providing Information about Canada to Mexico

Observations:

- Consensus seems to be that the Library plays an important role in providing the Mexican public with information about Canada and in supporting the cultural objectives of the Canadian government in Mexico.
- The Library has an impressive collection of Canadian for a library of its size. If this collection were to be dismantled, it could not likely be replaced in its entirety.
- The Library has a substantial collection of Canadian videos. This collection is popular with its external clients. A music collection is also planned to support the growing Mexican interest in Canadian music.
- The Library is almost exclusively focussed on providing information on Canada to the Mexican public. This group comprises Mexican government officials, academics, Canadian Studies Programs, business people, students, researchers, and tourists.
- The Library is handling many routine first-level enquiries for many program areas, however they are not always aware of the degree of this ongoing support.
- The Library regularly reviews the mission's website for dead links and to provide new relevant Internet links. This is a valuable service to ensure the currency and relevancy of the website's content links as program areas are often preoccupied with operational activities and do not have time for another time-consuming but important task.
- The mission has recently established the "Margaret Atwood/Gabrielle Roy Chair of Canadian Cultural Studies. The Library is well-placed to support this initiative with its collection of Canadian literature. This is perceived as a valuable support for the Embassy's academic relations as it shifts the pressure to the library to deal with enquiries from students.

Recommendations:

- More support and coordination between the Library and program areas is necessary to ensure that external clients are getting correct first-level information from the Library about mission programs, etc. *This will also create awareness amongst mission staff that this function is being served by the Library.*

2. Providing Information about Mexico to Mission Staff

Observations:

- There is a general lack of understanding and communication concerning the Library's current role and involvement in supporting mission programs. Some even question the value of the Library. Others feel that it serves as a useful repository for information about Canada and assists them with keeping current on related foreign policy and related issues, even if it is outside their current job assignment. For its part, the Library would welcome feedback on how it could better serve the needs of mission staff.
- There is agreement that there is potential for the Library to provide greater support for mission programs both in terms of helping deliver information to clients of all Embassy programs as well as to Embassy staff.
- A recurrent concern was that the library no longer handles the ordering of subscriptions for the mission. Staff would welcome the resumption of this function by the library.
- The Library provides regular support to the Canadian consulates in Mexico through the provision of research assistance and the donation of superceded library materials (e.g almanacs and telephone books).
- The Library has a good working relationship with other local libraries and this affords a valuable network for access to materials about Mexico. This strong bilateral relationship with Mexican libraries allows the mission access to more Mexican information resources without impacting upon the library's budget. The Library would like to further develop this relationship to support mission information needs.

Recommendations:

- The Library should consider providing services which enhance its role as a support to mission staff. For example, mission staff would welcome the opportunity to again be allowed to borrow periodicals. The benefits to the library's image would outweigh the potential risk of periodicals going missing. Another example would be re-assuming responsibility for ordering subscriptions

for the mission. The Library has already developed an expertise in this area and centralizing this function would help to ensure the further rationalization of acquisition resources. This would be positively received by the mission staff.

- A library committee should be established to promote better communications between the Library and its mission clients.
- This committee should be comprised of a member from each program area, and should include the Head Librarian. Committee members would ideally be working level mission staff who have a sound knowledge of their respective program areas.
- The chair of the committee should be from the Congressional and Public Affairs Program to which the Library reports.
- This committee should advise on such issues as collection development pertinent to mission staff, budget allocation, the Library's support to program objectives, marketing strategies, etc.
- Initially the frequency of meetings should be monthly until the committee is satisfied that major issues are understood, and an action plan is agreed upon.
- Meetings could then become quarterly or as committee mutually determines is sufficient.
- A list of all mission subscriptions should regularly be reviewed by the committee to ensure rationalization of titles and resources. Other information resources such as databases, and dictionaries purchased by programs should also be regularly brought to the attention of the committee.
- A client survey should be conducted of mission and select external clients to ensure that Library services are meeting client needs, and to help direct future growth of its services and collection.

3. Serving a Centralized Public Enquiries Function

Observations:

- The Library provides a number of invisible services to both mission staff and external clients. They often exist as the first point of contact for visitors to the Embassy, however, the Library is not easily found on the mission website nor is it available as an option on the Embassy's OCTEL telephone system. Some mission staff are unaware that the Library serves this function while others acknowledge it and welcome it to alleviate their workload for these enquiries.

Recommendations:

- Given that the Library is often the first point of contact for the Embassy they should have a more prominent position on the Embassy's website as well as being easily located on the OCTEL system. Embassy staff should work with the Library to ensure accuracy and timeliness of information provided on their behalf.

4. Library Operations – Mexico

Observations:

- Mission staff from many other programs are not generally aware of what library services are available to staff and the public. Many mission staff feel the Library is there only to serve the public, and are unaware of what the Library is already doing for their programs' clients and what potential exists for further support.
- Statistics are kept by the Library for certain public service activities, but do not reflect the full extent of the services provided, number of clients served, or the time spent on such activities.
- The Library does not effectively or routinely market its services to mission staff and to its Mexican clientele. The Library does send periodic emails to clients to alert them of new acquisitions, and provide select table of contents, however, many staff have indicated that they do not have time to review these emails or provide feedback. Others welcome this service.
- The Library's current acquisitions budget is CAD \$18,000.00 per year. They have recently acquired select depository status from the Canadian government for the acquisition of Canadian government publications. This will provide for cost savings in the acquisition of key resources such as Statistics Canada publications, regularly purchased by the library and used by library clients.
- Library staff are often overly focussed on routine Library tasks (e.g. catalogue maintenance), thereby preventing them from developing their services to mission staff.
- The Library staff are occasionally called upon to do many non-library related activities for the mission such as translating.
- Library support staff has indicated that it would benefit from training on topics such as library procedures and client services.
- Current library configuration is not conducive to good client relations. There is no obvious and welcoming first point of contact for clients entering the library proper.

Recommendations:

- Usage of Library space could be maximized by consolidation and weeding of the collection, and could be more efficiently configured to promote a more "welcoming" atmosphere. The Library's current floor plan could be efficiently and effectively re-worked to accommodate less space, thereby supporting the operational requirements of the mission.

- The Library should develop a marketing strategy in conjunction with the library committee. This could include bookmarks for distribution to both internal and external clients, a library pamphlet outlining library services, and a targeted newsletter. The Library may also want to consider having a booth at the annual meeting of Canadian Studies in Mexico.
- The Library should develop service standards to delineate what level of assistance can be provided to both external and mission clients. This will help the library manage the time it spends on non-mission related information requests, thereby providing guidelines for the depth of research that can be spent on various client groups. The development and posting of an Internet use policy at the Internet stations would also help clarify acceptable use by clients.
- A collection development policy should be developed to assist with general collection management including the establishment of retention periods to ensure the regular weeding of the collection.
- The Library should re-evaluate its priorities to ensure that time is not spent doing work of less value (e.g. catalogue related tasks). This re-allocation of time will allow the Library to focus on work which more directly supports mission objectives.
- The Library and its clients would be better served by re-engineering its statistical gathering procedures, both the type of activities measured and the means by which this is done. The Library should be recording in more detail who uses its services and sources. This information could then be used to further refine its services and collection. Headquarters Library has already customized for mission libraries a client tracking software package (Remedy) that would automatically record statistical information. The information gathered could easily be used for generating management reports. The Library in Mexico should be encouraged to implement usage of this package.
- To improve communications and create awareness of library related issues, regular weekly meetings should be held by the head librarian with her staff. These meetings need not be lengthy but would afford an opportunity to discuss issues and developments of importance to the library service. This would also ensure that there is coordination of services between the reception desk (located on the ground floor) and the library proper (located on the second floor).

5. Library Operations – Ottawa

Observations:

- Most embassy staff are aware of the departmental Virtual Library, but felt they do not use it to its full potential. On-site training by headquarters Library staff with continuing support from the Embassy library was perceived as a useful and welcomed initiative.
- The Library relies on the headquarters Library in Ottawa for support in reference and research, cataloguing and acquisition services. The Librarian has also benefited from training sessions hosted by Ottawa.
- The Library would welcome more support from the HQ Library, especially in the coordination of library services amongst the other mission libraries.

Recommendations:

- Headquarters' Library will seek funding from the Information Management and Technology Bureau to conduct a pilot to provide select Canadian electronic resources to mission libraries for access by their non-departmental clients. Consideration will be given to the feasibility of formulating a reciprocal agreement for the exchange of access to select electronic databases with Mexican libraries.
- Headquarters' Library will ensure that Reference Portfolio Librarians will deliver onsite training to mission staff in the use of the Virtual Library. This would be followed by continuing support and training by the mission library staff.
- Headquarters' Library is currently developing a discussion forum for its website to promote dialogue amongst departmental users. This will be developed to include a forum for headquarters and mission libraries to share common issues and best practices.

Review of the Documentation Centre – Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris

A review of library services at the Canadian Cultural Centre (CCC) in Paris was conducted between April 23 and April 30, 2003. This review was undertaken at the recommendation of the departmental Office of the Inspector General (SIX) as part of their regular inspection and audit of the Canadian Embassy and Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, and as part of the audit of Department's Library Services. Staff from both the Canadian Cultural Centre and the Canadian Embassy were interviewed to obtain general feedback on perception and usage of the Documentation Centre. Appendix Two lists documents consulted.

The Canadian Cultural Centre was opened in Paris in 1970 as a result of the 1965 Cultural Agreement between Canada and France. Among other things, the agreement stipulated that both countries would make their books, periodicals and other publications available, and to accomplish this, Canada established a library in the Cultural Centre. Since this time, the Library or Documentation Centre as it is called, has provided the French public with information about Canada on a variety of topics and in various formats.

The Documentation Centre, located on the third floor of the Canadian Cultural Centre, is currently staffed by two professional librarians: a reference librarian and a collection librarian. It is open to the public from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. on Thursdays, and from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. on Saturdays. It is closed to the public on Mondays.

Since 1997, the Documentation Centre has expanded its services to include access to electronic resources as a compliment to its substantial print collection of Canadiana. To facilitate access to these resources, its catalogue is available to the public through the Internet. The Documentation Centre continues to provide an active and popular service to the French public, and thus can be said to be successfully fulfilling its mandate.

General Observations and Recommendations:

Canadian mission libraries generally serve three major purposes for their missions:

- providing information about Canada to the host country
- providing information about the host country to mission staff
- serving a centralized public enquiries function

It should be noted however, that all mission libraries are unique, and the degree to which they are able to provide these services will depend on their particular circumstances.

The following observations and recommendations for the Documentation Centre are grouped according to these three themes, however because of the Canada-France cultural agreement and the physical separation of the Cultural Centre from the Embassy, it is the first service, providing information about Canada to France, which is the predominate one. There did not seem to be any indication that either the Embassy, the CCC or the Documentation Centre wished or needed to change this emphasis. This report will also look at library operations.

1. Providing Information about Canada to France

Observations:

- The Documentation Centre provides research and reference services to the French community seeking information about or doing research on Canada. This service has on occasion also been used by people from other European countries seeking information about Canada. The collection does not circulate, as the intent is to ensure that materials are always available on-site for consultation.
- There are 18 Canadian studies centres in France, and members of these institutions (both faculty and students) represent a significant portion of the Documentation Centre's clients.
- Although the focus of the Documentation Centre is almost exclusively geared towards providing information to the French community, they do provide 'Canadian' information when requested to the mission staff for such purposes as speeches, biographical information for upcoming visits, etc.
- During the week of our evaluation, the Documentation Centre had a steady influx of clientele using their collection and research services. Clients were using both the hard copy and electronic collections, thereby dispelling the common perception that 'everything is available on the Internet'. A cursory review of reference request forms for the months of April 2000, April 2002, and April 2003

indicated that at least 50% of the clients required print materials to meet their research needs, while another 25% were using the Internet for research. We understand that this is a normal volume and variety of research activity for the Documentation Centre, however, due to the lack of developed statistical data, this cannot be validated.

- The Documentation Centre regularly uses the reference and interlibrary loan services of the Library of Parliament, the National Library of Canada, and headquarters library. The Documentation Centre uses the Library of Parliament and its Research Branch for legislative and parliamentary questions. The National Library is relied upon for both interlibrary loans (particularly their periodical collection) and reference. The Documentation Centre also uses the departmental Virtual Library and reference services.
- The Embassy has two designated staff (one media/political, one business/trade) who handle most of the requests for information on Canada that come from the French media, government officials, and the business community. This arrangement, based largely on who the client is, currently meets the needs of the Embassy. The two staff members are well aware of how the Documentation Centre can assist, and often forward questions from the public to the Documentation Centre. It appears that this level of awareness of library services does not extend throughout the rest of the mission and to some extent the CCC.
- The Documentation Centre primarily answers requests from academics, students and the public. They will also answer requests from government officials, the media and members of the business and legal communities who approach them directly.
- The collection size is approximately 20,000 items (print, electronic and microforms) comprised of reference works, books, documents and periodicals. They also have selective depository status for official Canadian government documents, allowing them to acquire relevant Canadian government documents at no cost.
- The Documentation Centre has a substantial collection of Canadiana for a library of its size. Even though the Documentation Centre has had to cancel many titles over the years, an effort has been made to ensure that the collection continues to provide a representative view of Canada and its varied regions, peoples, and activities. If this collection were to be dismantled or eroded further, it could not likely be replaced in its entirety.
- Collection development activities appear to consist solely of renewing existing periodical subscriptions and reference annuals, with minimal growth to the book collection as the budget permits. This is done largely in a vacuum, as the

Documentation Centre staff are not aware of what other materials are being purchased by other groups in the mission or at other Canadian studies centres.

- The Canadian Cultural Centre's web site was created in 2000, and provides information on its activities and programs, as well as providing links to information about Canada. The Documentation Centre contributes to its own section on the CCC's web site as time permits. For example, they provide links to Canadian information and update the descriptions of electronic products available in the Documentation Centre.
- The Documentation Centre and the Academic Relations section share a common splash page on the CCC web site. Statistics are not readily available on the number of clients accessing the Documentation Centre's web pages.
- There is no link from the CCC web site to the web site of the Canadian Embassy, although the reverse is true. This is potentially confusing for clients, as it is not obvious when looking at the CCC site that the two institutions are related.
- The CCC receives frequent enquiries (e-mail and walk-in) from French students interested in studying in Canada. To accommodate these requests, a documentalist position was recently created, with the appointee slated to start in her position in early May. There seemed to be confusion among the staff of several different sections about the logistics of this position/service (e.g. hours of service, reporting structure, other duties, etc.). The Documentation Centre has been handling many of the walk-in requests for information of this nature, and is looking forward to having someone on site to answer these queries and house the collection of university calendars.

Recommendations:

- Although the Academic Relations section works closely with the Association Française d'Études Canadiennes (AFEC), the Documentation Centre should develop its own formal contacts with AFEC for networking and resource sharing purposes. Currently the Documentation Centre has informal and sporadic contact with members of AFEC, however there is no consistent mechanism for determining any resource sharing potential that may exist in France for Canadian information. For example, Documentation Centre staff should attend AFEC conferences and meetings when possible. This would be an excellent opportunity for them to network with AFEC members, to become apprised of current issues, and to distribute any of their promotional material. This would help further the Documentation Centre's leadership role as the only library in Europe devoted exclusively to Canadiana.
- As a compliment to its increased partnership with AFEC, the Documentation Centre should consider extending borrowing privileges for its literature collection

to the academic community. The goodwill that this would engender would likely far outweigh any potential impact on the integrity of the collection.

- The Documentation Centre should ensure that all mission staff (particularly those that deal directly with the public) are made aware of what library services are available to them and the public. This could be facilitated through such marketing vehicles as bookmarks and/or focussed short pamphlets highlighting its services. These bookmarks and pamphlets should be distributed to all mission staff as well as being available at the Embassy and CCC's public access points. The Documentation Centre is well placed and prepared to serve the French community with enquiries about Canada. Increased awareness of their services will help to eliminate instances where the public is misdirected or turned away without being helped.
- Given the limited acquisitions budget, awareness of what information resources are being purchased throughout the mission would help the Documentation Centre to maximize its purchasing power. Ideally the Documentation Centre should be informed when materials are being either purchased or discarded so that the Centre and its clients could benefit.
- The Documentation Centre should continue to ensure that the collection represents a balanced view of Canada and its many regions and people.
- The current print collection should continue to be maintained and weeded as required. It is clear that the collection is relied upon by French clientele doing research on Canada and related issues. The collection is being used for more than research solely on cultural issues, and provides a depth of information that is not available through the Internet. To dismantle this collection or erode its ongoing development would seriously impact on the quality of Canadiana available in France, and indeed quite possibly in Europe. The National Library of Canada has digitized parts of its collections, however, the majority of the collection is still in traditional forms (e.g. paper or microfiche). Digitization remains an enormous and still prohibitively expensive task, as demonstrated by the National Library of Canada. (National Library of Canada. 2003-2004 Estimates, Part III: Report on Plans and Priorities, <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/obj/a8/f2/01-e.pdf>).
- Stronger ties with AFEC would allow the Documentation Centre to make informed acquisition decisions based on what resources are available at other institutions, and thereby ensuring that they are not purchasing resources that are readily available elsewhere in France. This may also help mitigate the gaps in the periodicals and reference section without impacting upon the budget.
- The Documentation Centre should also increase the currency and breadth of information and links available to the public through the web site. To accomplish

this, the collection librarian should be tasked with regularly and consistently updating the links on the web site and the 'favoris' (bookmarks) on the Documentation Centre's Internet stations. This will increase the scope and currency of information provided to the public without impacting on the acquisitions budget. New library acquisitions could also be featured on the Documentation Centre's web page.

- The Documentation Centre should have a more prominent presence on the CCC web site, and consideration should be given to providing both the Documentation Centre and Academic Relations with their own splash pages rather than being co-located. Traffic on the Documentation Centre's web site should be tracked to the extent possible, and the statistics given regularly to the librarians to aide them in developing their web content and services.
- A link should be established from the CCC web site to that of the Embassy of Canada.
- The role of the new documentalist position should be clearly communicated to all staff. As this walk-in service to students is probably going to be on a part-time basis with set hours, the Documentation Centre staff should not be expected to answer student queries when the documentalist is not available. To ensure this, the collection of university calendars should be co-located with the documentalist, and hours of service clearly indicated to both students and CCC staff, especially the front reception desk, so that there is no expectation that the Documentation Centre will cover the service.

2. Providing Information about France to Mission Staff

Observations:

- The Documentation Centre does not provide extensive reference services to either the staff of the Cultural Centre or the Embassy on a regular basis. This function is handled by individual program areas, either through the use of the Virtual Library or with resources they have purchased with their own budgets. The Embassy's two designated staff, as mentioned above, provide information for senior Embassy staff on a regular basis, and other staff as requested. They also provide daily briefing packages from a variety of sources including the Virtual Library. The Documentation Centre is not resourced (either with staff or information sources) to meet these specific needs. The physical distance of the Documentation Centre from the Embassy may not make it practical for them to have an increased involvement on a regular basis. Consensus seemed to be that this arrangement was satisfactory.

Recommendations:

- Under the current mandate and resource level of the Documentation Centre, it is probably best to maintain the status quo. If a decision were taken to increase the Documentation Centre's role in this area, it would be necessary to ensure that commensurate resources are made available.
- By virtue of their training and skill set, librarians are well positioned to provide research services and guidance on the use of desktop information tools. Some other mission libraries (e.g. New York and Washington) play a bigger role in supporting mission staff and their research needs, however this was never part of the mandate of the library in the CCC. An expanded role for the Documentation Centre is certainly something the mission could consider, however, the Documentation Centre is not currently resourced to provide this service. It should be noted that these other mission libraries generally do not provide the same extensive collection of Canadiana and level of service to the public as is the case with the CCC. The Documentation Centre is staffed by two professional librarians who have the training, however they are currently focussed on external clients and their needs, as mandated by the 1965 cultural agreement.

3. Serving a Centralized Public Enquiries Function

Observations:

- The Documentation Centre cannot be said to be serving a centralized public enquiries function, as both the CCC and the Embassy have their own reception desks. Given the physical separation between the CCC and the Embassy as well as the location of the Documentation Centre on the third floor, this is inevitable.
- There seems to be a general lack of awareness among some Embassy staff that the Documentation Centre is well positioned and resourced to provide information on Canada to the French. A recent example was that of a client who was referred by the Embassy to a Canadian bookstore in Paris who in turn referred them to the Documentation Centre for their information needs. Similarly, the Documentation Centre would benefit by being more consistently informed of what services and activities are being offered by other mission programs.

Recommendations:

- Although it is unlikely that the Documentation Centre would ever fully assume the role of centralized public enquiries, there is scope for improving awareness among mission staff of what the Documentation Centre can do for the public. As

was mentioned earlier, marketing tools such as pamphlets, bookmarks, and a stronger presence on the CCC web site would help to create awareness and knowledge of the potential of the Documentation Centre.

- The mission and its clients would benefit from increased communication between the Documentation Centre and the other program areas. A large number of the French public either contacts or visits the Documentation Centre, and while the Documentation Centre can generally direct clients to the proper area, Embassy staff should work with the Centre to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of information provided on their behalf. The Documentation Centre is also well placed to make available other programs' pamphlets and brochures.

4. Library Operations – Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris

Observations:

- Although a reference sheet is filled out for all client requests, the Documentation Centre does not systematically compile this information. There is therefore, no analysis on collection usage, clientele, peak periods, subject areas, etc. that could be used for further developing or justifying the library collection and its services. There are no statistics kept on which sources are used in the Documentation Centre as re-shelved material is not recorded. Interlibrary loan requests are not recorded and analyzed, thereby hindering opportunities for identifying areas of the collection that might require additional resources to meet client needs. It should be noted that the Documentation Centre is not required to regularly submit activity statistics to management, however they would benefit from management review and comment on their statistics.
- In 1999 the hours of operation of the Documentation Centre were extended, and they are now open to the public on Thursday evenings until 9 p.m. and Saturdays from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. in addition to their regular hours. They are closed to the public on Mondays. This has necessitated a shift in hours for the staff to accommodate this extended service, as well as the need to contract non-librarian staff to cover the reference desk as required.
- Although there is a general sense that some periods (i.e. time of day, day of week, month, etc.) are busier than others, there is no statistical evidence to validate this. The Documentation Centre does not record statistics indicating when clients visit, so they are unable to say with any documented certainty when their peak periods of activity occur.
- Documentation Centre staff are highly committed to providing quality library service, however staff morale is variable. This is a result of such issues as the lack of ongoing feedback from management and the lack of involvement in the decision-making process relevant to the Documentation Centre. The two staff of

the Documentation Centre (both classified at the same level) tend to work in isolation from each other. They are not always aware of the actual tasks performed by the other, or opportunities for teamwork. There used to be a head librarian responsible for coordinating Documentation Centre activities, and representing it at management meetings, however this position no longer exists. All of these together contribute to a general lack of communication and their feelings of isolation.

- The collection librarian's office is not located in the Documentation Centre proper, which further contributes to this physical isolation and hinders teamwork and communication.
- The only SIGNET terminal in the Library proper is at the reference desk. The reference librarian must therefore rely exclusively on this terminal which is not convenient for her when she is working in her office.
- There is currently a tendency to wait for approval from the Director of the CCC for even routine library issues that are easily resolvable by the two professional library staff.
- The Documentation Centre's current budget is CAD \$30,000, and covers acquisitions and related activities such as travel/conferences. They have select depository status from the Canadian government for the acquisition of Canadian government publications at no cost. Documentation Centre services are provided at no charge to external clients except for the recovery of costs such as photocopying and printing costs.

Recommendations:

- In order to simplify the analysis of their statistics, the Documentation Centre should record their reference requests electronically. Headquarters library has already customized for mission libraries a client tracking software package (Remedy) that electronically records statistical information. The information gathered could easily be used for generating management reports which would show usage by subject, client type, etc. Ideally the reference requests should be entered directly into Remedy, however if this is not practical, documentation centre staff could continue to record questions on paper, and at the end of each day enter the information into the database. Documentation Centre staff have agreed that this compilation and analysis of statistics are tasks that the collection librarian could undertake as part of her collection development.
- Better statistics on collection usage, obtainable through recording which materials are being reshelfed, reference, and interlibrary loan activities, would help to justify the existence of the collection and better identify subject areas that are used and/or are important to clients, or need enhancements. Again these

activities could be done by the collection librarian as part of collection development.

- By recording client visits to the Documentation Centre, the staff will know with certainty when their peak periods of activity are most likely to occur. Arrangements could then be made for the collection librarian to be on call as a backup to assist the reference librarian with on-site clients. This information might be more easily gathered separately from Remedy, by each day manually recording the number of visitors to the Documentation Centre in two hour blocks (e.g. record each visitor between 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., etc.). This information could be forwarded to the collection librarian as another statistic for analysis of library services.
- The need for back-up staff in a small library is a necessity and the Documentation Centre is no exception. While it is not reasonable to expect occasional staff to deliver the same level of service as professional librarians, it is important that they be well versed in the use of basic reference tools and library procedures (e.g. recording statistics). In the case of more complex reference requests, occasional staff should initiate follow-up with the reference librarian to ensure client satisfaction.
- The two librarians should hold meetings at least fortnightly to discuss ongoing library issues such as current reference topics, acquisitions, marketing, statistics, task allocation, the elimination of unnecessary tasks such as the labelling of library journals, etc. Special emphasis should be placed on discussing collection development issues (for example, which titles are on order and subject areas that need strengthening). Issues that are not easily resolved between the two could be referred to the Director of the CCC.
- Ideally it would be preferable for the collection librarian to have her office located in the Documentation Centre proper. Part of her role is to assist with reference during peak periods or other times that the reference librarian needs backup assistance, and this co-location would make it easier for both librarians. It would also minimize the collection librarian's isolation from Documentation Centre activities and further facilitate the opportunity for communication between the two staff. This would increase her general awareness of ongoing reference activity, providing her with knowledge and context within which to make her acquisition decisions.
- Another SIGNET terminal should be installed in the reference librarian's office. This would allow her to access SIGNET when she is in her office, providing her with the basic tools (e-mail, Virtual Library and the Internet) to continue her work when she is not stationed at the reference desk.

- There are definitely opportunities to streamline workflow in the Documentation Centre. For example, the collection librarian records incoming periodicals and forwards them to the reference librarian, who then selects and photocopies relevant articles to be placed in the dossiers compiled on topics of interest to clients. Compiling the dossiers is a worthwhile activity as it enhances the service available to clients, however, it is not always easy for the reference librarian to find the time to do this task, as her primary responsibility is to answer reference queries. It would be more efficient for the collection librarian to review and select dossier material as she is processing incoming periodicals. The two professional staff have agreed that this arrangement could be implemented.
- The Documentation Centre should formally articulate its policies on issues such as library mission, standards for services provided to both external and internal clientele, collection development, and marketing and communication strategy. This should be done in consultation with the management of the Canadian Cultural Centre and the Embassy, which should in turn be communicated to CCC and Embassy staff, and highlighted on marketing materials.
- Until collection usage statistics can be more thoroughly examined (i.e. with better statistical reporting in place), it is not possible to determine whether the current resource allocation is sufficient to meet client needs. More formal networking with AFEC members and other Canadian studies centres in France may also change the budget equation.

5. Library Operations – Ottawa

Observations:

- The Documentation Centre uses the headquarters library in Ottawa for support in the cataloguing of its materials. This minimizes the amount of actual cataloguing that needs to be done on-site by the collection librarian. The headquarters library is also used for reference requests as needed. Both librarians have benefited from training sessions hosted by the Ottawa library.
- The collection librarian currently places orders and does follow-up as required for forty-nine periodical titles. This involves separate orders and financial transactions for practically every title.
- The Documentation Centre would welcome more training and resource sharing opportunities with headquarters library.
- Embassy staff interviewed were aware of and appreciative of the departmental Virtual Library. Interest was expressed in having headquarters library staff return to the Embassy to provide on-site training.

Recommendations:

- Headquarters library can assist with streamlining the ordering and payment process for periodicals as well as other library sources such as books and reference titles through the use of the electronic Post Subscriptions List. The collection librarian has been made aware of this service, and has indicated that she would be interested in working with the headquarters library to use this service where possible.
- Headquarters library will seek funding from the Information Management and Technology Bureau to conduct a pilot to provide select Canadian electronic resources to mission libraries for access by their non-departmental clients. Consideration will be given to the feasibility of formulating a reciprocal agreement for the exchange of access to select electronic databases with French libraries.
- Headquarters library is currently developing a discussion forum for its website to promote dialogue amongst departmental users. This will be developed to include a forum for headquarters and mission libraries to share common issues and best practices.
- Headquarters library is always pleased to provide coaching assistance on the Virtual Library, including on-site visits to missions as resources permit. We will make note of the interest expressed by Paris for further training. One option being explored is consolidating training by geographic regions, particularly for missions that have had previous on-site training as is the case with several missions in Europe, including Paris.

Review of the Research Centre – Canadian Consulate General, New York

A review of library services at the mission library in New York City was conducted between June 16th and June 19th, 2003. This review was undertaken as part of a regular inspection and audit of the Canadian Consulate General conducted by the departmental Office of the Inspector General (SIX), and as part of the audit of headquarters Library Services (SXKL). Staff from a number of program areas were interviewed to obtain general feedback on perception and usage of the Mission's library services.

The Consulate General's library collection dates back to 1945, and in the early 1970s, professional library staff were hired. At one time there were four staff in the library: two librarians and two library assistants. In the mid 1990's the library staff was downsized from four to two people: a Head Librarian and a Research Assistant. Whereas originally the Library's focus was primarily on research services to external clients, it was at this time that its focus began to shift to its internal Mission clients.

In the summer of 1997, the Research Centre, as it is now called, was downsized by 60 percent of its floor space when it was relocated from the 16th floor to the Mezzanine level. Despite the constraints caused by the diminished floor space, the new location of the Research Centre on the Mezzanine level has given it a central location closer to all Mission staff. Further downsizing to the Research Centre floor space is planned for the near future.

It was universally remarked by Mission staff interviewed that the Research Centre plays an integral and important role in the delivery of information to staff and in supporting Mission objectives, and that the staff were hard-working, approachable and helpful. The Research Centre has successfully adapted its services to an electronic information environment, moving from a traditional paper-based collection to a research centre focussing on delivering a wide range of new services.

General Observations and Recommendations:

Canadian mission libraries generally serve three major purposes for their missions:

- providing information about Canada to the host country
- serving a centralized public enquiries function
- providing information about the host country to mission staff

It should be noted however, that all mission libraries are unique, and the degree to which they are able to provide these services will depend on their particular circumstances. For this report, the roles of providing information about Canada to the host country and the public enquiries function have been combined. The Research Centre now largely provides information about Canada through its involvement with the Mission website, rather than more traditional ways. This report will also comment on library operations.

1. Providing Information about Canada to The Tri-State Area (Eastern New York State, New Jersey, Connecticut); and Serving a Centralized Public Enquiries Function

Observations:

- The collection size is approximately 7,000 monograph and reference titles and 200 subscriptions, of which approximately 75 titles are retained in the Research Centre. The remaining subscriptions are purchased by the Research Centre on behalf of the various programs for their retention. The collection has been significantly downsized over the past few years with the increasing availability of electronic information.
- The Research Centre does not lend to the public, but Mission staff may borrow from the collection.
- Recent space reductions in the Research Centre resulting from space re-configuration in the Consulate General meant that the Research Centre could no longer house their collection of Canadian Government documents. The entire collection and Canadian Government documents depository status was transferred to the Eastern Connecticut State University in late summer 2002. By virtue of a special arrangement with the Canadian Government Depository Services Program in Ottawa, the Research Centre was able to maintain its access to electronic documents, most notably Statistics Canada and Parliamentary publications.
- External clients are comprised largely of media, businesses and financial institutions, academics, students, and members of the public. The Research Centre is open afternoons to external clients by appointment only.

- Although the Research Centre does not appear to provide information to the tri-state public as often as it did in the past, many of the non-traditional library activities that Research Centre staff have become involved in do in fact serve this purpose:
 - The Head Librarian is the coordinator for the Mission's main web site (newyork.gc.ca) and the cultural web site "Upper North Side".
 - PERPA's main vehicle for disseminating Canadian cultural news and events relative to the tri-state area is through "The Upper North Side", comprised of a web site, a monthly e-newsletter and a quarterly print newsletter. The Head Librarian, in conjunction with PERPA, is responsible for the editing and management of the "Upper North Side" web site, and the editing and distribution of the monthly e-mail newsletter derived from it. The e-mail newsletter has a circulation of approximately 1,700, and the print version has a circulation of 8,600 (print run is 10,000 copies). There are currently no statistics on traffic to the web site.
- A program arranged through Laguardia College, a local community college, regularly provides two interns on a six month term at no charge to the Mission. One intern works on the Mission's web site and the other on the Contacts database, both under the direction of the Research Centre staff. This arrangement, which started originally with the web site, has been in place for approximately five years.
- The receptionist working on the Mezzanine level unofficially assists the Research Centre in a number of ways. She assists them with answering basic letters from the public, particularly school children. The Research Centre has provided a form letter and student information kits consisting of maps, web sites, etc., and the Research Assistant reviews all responses before they are sent out. Both Mission receptionists will also forward general telephone enquiries to the Research Centre as required.
- Efforts were made in the past to market to some tri-state libraries (e.g. distribution of bookmarks), however this did not seem to generate any tangible results. Research Centre staff have since determined that the web is a more effective vehicle for advertising their services to the public.

Recommendations:

- Traffic on the Mission's web site should be tracked to the extent possible, and the statistics reviewed regularly by the web coordinator, in this case the Head Librarian. This information should be used to develop web content and services.

- The Mission may want to consider establishing a permanent position to assume responsibility for the web site and desktop publishing, and reporting to the Head Librarian. It is useful for the Research Centre to be actively involved in these activities, and it is well positioned to oversee and manage the relationship between this position and the rest of the Mission. However the Mission also has a strong requirement for internal research services, and the demands currently placed on the Research Centre staff relative to the web does not allow them to focus and tailor their value-added research services to the fullest extent possible. The creation of a permanent position would also remove the heavy reliance on the volunteer intern program, which could be terminated by Laguardia College at any point. This position could also assume responsibility for the work being done on the Contacts database now being undertaken by a Laguardia College intern.
- To streamline the process of answering written public enquiries requesting basic information about Canada, the amount of hard copy information and the number of links provided to clients should be limited. For example, the Canada Site (http://www.canada.gc.ca/main_e.html) provides a good starting point for people interested in Canada. This information has already been researched, and is kept current, thereby reducing the time the Research Centre staff spends on compiling a list for distribution, as well as ensuring the quality of the information being provided.

2. Providing Information about the Tri-State Area to Mission Staff

Observations:

- In the past few years, the Research Centre has gone from being primarily a library for external clients to a vital research centre for Mission staff. Research services are relied upon by all sections of the Consulate General.
- Seventy five percent of the Research Centre's reference and research requests are from Mission staff and twenty five percent from external clients. This is a reversal from 10 years ago, where the opposite was the case.
- The Research Centre has been very successful in adapting its services to an electronic information environment, moving from a traditional paper-based collection to a research centre focussing on delivering a wide range of new services:
 - Using desktop information tools such as HQ's Virtual Library, select databases and the Internet, the Research Centre provides value added services that Mission staff have found invaluable:
 - daily media monitoring delivered on a request basis by e-mail to Mission staff.
 - weekly count of significant mention of Canada by local press.

- personalized assistance in setting up tailored alert and search strategies using desktop information resources from the Virtual Library.
 - The Journalist: a monthly e-mail compilation of links to a variety of sources on topics of interest to the Mission.
 - regular preparation of background information packages, including biographical and company information, which are useful for officers of the Mission in preparation for outreach and official functions.
 - the Research Centre is responsible for maintaining the Mission's Contacts database of approximately 30,000 names, and the Research Assistant is an active member of the Mission's 'client contacts' committee.
- While some of these services can be done by the Mission staff themselves, they have commented that the Research Centre staff have the expertise to do this more efficiently and effectively. This means that their time can be more profitably spent doing the analysis and outreach activities required in their work. Staff appreciated that the Research Centre regularly has the daily media monitoring clips available at the start of the working day. Some people read the clips via their Blackberry before arriving at work.
 - While staff generally found these services useful, some staff (largely from the trade side) commented that it was useful background information, but that they often require more specific information found in their specialized trade resources. In some cases, time did not permit them to read the daily news clips as often as they would have liked.
- The Research Centre does some marketing of its services to mission staff, and they do try to contact new staff individually to inform them of information services available. However, although a high proportion of staff use the services of the Research Centre, they are not necessarily fully aware of all information services available. For example, not all Mission staff interviewed were aware of the full range of content and functionality of the departmental Virtual Library, and expressed interest in further training and orientation. As well, some Mission staff had assumed that the Research Centre was primarily for PERPA staff.
 - The Research Centre has occasionally hosted 'brown bag' training sessions on the desktop information tools, and do provide individual coaching sessions when requested.
 - Newspapers and journals retained in the Research Centre are routed to Mission staff as requested. For some this is a valuable service to keep them up-to-date on issues. Retention periods vary depending upon shelving space available, however most journal subscriptions are retained for one year.

Recommendations:

- To increase awareness among Mission staff, more focus should be directed towards marketing and providing orientation and training sessions on Research Centre services. The Mission intranet site could also be used as a vehicle for disseminating this information.
- The Research Centre should provide regular coaching and awareness sessions on the use of desktop information tools (e.g. the Virtual Library, Burrelle's Media Directory, etc.), both on an individual and group basis. This could be done in consultation with the HQ Library, who have developed relevant training packages.
- The Research Centre should more pro-actively ensure that targeted clips/alerts are set up on individual desktops so that Mission staff can automatically monitor events of relevance to their specific interests and client groups.
- The Mission may want to consider providing the Research Centre with the resources necessary to allow them to provide more in-depth and targeted research for the Mission staff. The creation of a position responsible for the web site and desktop publishing (as outlined above) would free up the time of the current Research Centre staff to augment their research services. This would address the comments by several Mission staff interviewed who indicated that current alerting services provided by the Research Centre were too general for their needs. This would also allow more time for coaching on the use of desktop tools.

3. Library Operations – Research Centre, New York

Observations:

- Although the budget for the Research Centre is administered by the MAO, and the Head of the Research Centre reports to PERPA, the Research Centre provides services to the entire Mission.
- The Research Centre's current budget is CAD \$49,000, and includes costs of information resources purchased for the entire Mission. The budget has fluctuated between \$60,000 and \$90,000 over the past ten years depending upon Mission funds and objectives, and the availability of resources on the Virtual Library. According to the Head Librarian, they order approximately 200 subscriptions annually, of which only 75 are actually retained in the Research Centre, the rest being purchased on behalf of program areas and retained in their offices. Additional funding for acquisitions outside the budget allocation has to be requested from the MAO.

- The Research Assistant works as the office manager in the Mission's Princeton office one day every two weeks. In her absence, the Mezzanine receptionist covers some of her duties such as the kardexing and routing of journals and newspapers.
- The Head Librarian estimates that he now spends 50 percent of his time doing the non-traditional activities associated with the web and e-newsletter, and 50 percent on more traditional library functions such as administration and research requests.
- Currently there are three interns from the trade program located in the Research Centre. While this arrangement is a result of a lack of office space in the Mission, both the interns and the Research Centre staff found it beneficial. The interns could confer with each other as well as easily seek research assistance from the Research Centre staff. This also helps to keep the Research Centre connected with Mission research projects.
- The Research Centre is in the midst of another space reduction exercise to accommodate increased numbers of Mission staff. It currently occupies 858 sq. ft. (25' 6" x 29' 4"), and the proposed configuration will be 432 sq. ft. (25' 6" x 14' 10").
- The Research Centre has only recently begun recording daily activities and research statistics, and no compilation or analysis of this information has been done. The Research Centre does not have published service standards or a written collection development policy.
- The Head Librarian is a member of the Mission's Technology Committee, which is currently chaired by the Consul and Senior Trade Commissioner. The committee meets irregularly to discuss various technological and web content issues.
- The Head Librarian is also working with the Mission's systems administrator in the development of a Mission intranet site.

Recommendations:

- The Head Librarian should be more actively involved in budget discussions that concern the Mission's information resources budget. When reduction and rationalization of information resources is necessary, he is best placed to advise program managers on which resources are used, and alternative sources for this information.

- It would be advisable for the Head Librarian to be involved in the decision making relative to the re-configuration of the Research Centre. He has indicated that there are certain subject areas within the print collection that should be maintained (non-fiction collection of political, trade and economic titles), however he has agreed that the print collection can be further downsized to accommodate the proposed floor space of 432 sq. feet. Materials that could be weeded include the vertical files, and much of the fiction and art collections. He should also be involved in the placement of shelving and furniture in the newly configured space.
- Given the space and budget restraints, it would be advisable to create a collection development policy, to ensure that the materials acquired meets the evolving information needs of the Mission.
- The Research Centre should review and update its mandate to ensure that it reflects the current information needs of the Mission. Service level standards should be agreed upon by the Mission and posted so all clients, both internal and external, will be aware of what services are available to them. This information should be made widely available through print format, such as a brochure, and on the Mission's Internet and Intranet sites.
- The recording of daily activities and research statistics should be continued and developed further. The Research Centre should be encouraged to use an automated client tracking system (Remedy) that electronically records statistical information. The HQ Library has already customized the interface for use by mission libraries, and will work with the Research Centre to further adapt the interface to reflect the full range of activities and services of the Research Centre. This will allow the Research Centre to track and analyse its activities, assisting with collection development, budget allocation and service development to ensure it is meeting the Mission's information needs.
- Many members of the Technology Committee felt that they should meet more frequently and on regular basis, preferably monthly. To facilitate this, it was suggested that a deputy head be appointed to chair the committee when the head was unavailable. This would help ensure that the work of the committee progresses. Ideally the head and the deputy head should be from different program areas.

4. Library Operations – Ottawa

Observations:

- Most Mission staff are aware of the departmental Virtual Library, though some felt they were not aware of its full potential. On-site training by headquarters Library staff with continuing support from the Research Centre was considered a useful initiative.

- The Research Centre uses the Virtual Library, HQ Reference Services, Acquisitions Services and Cataloguing Services and the Library's e-newsletter, Library LINKages regularly.
- The Head Librarian felt it would be useful to have some general guidelines and parameters for mission libraries (e.g. copyright laws, National Library of Canada weeding and disposal of Crown Assets). He would also appreciate information about core competencies and benchmarking for libraries.
- Research Centre staff have both attended the HQ Mission Libraries Conference, and felt it was worthwhile.
- Research Centre staff would like to see more contact between mission libraries, for example a discussion forum and inter-library lending. While HQ Library does lend to missions, not all mission libraries lend their books to other mission libraries.

Recommendations:

- Headquarters library is always pleased to provide coaching assistance to Mission staff on the Virtual Library, including remote shadowing sessions, and on-site visits as resources permit. We can also provide advice and guidance to Resource Centre staff on the development and delivery of coaching sessions tailored to their clients needs.
- HQ Library will endeavour to develop and compile general guidelines and benchmarks on various aspects of the operation of mission libraries.
- Headquarters Library is currently developing a discussion forum for its website to promote dialogue amongst departmental users. This will be developed to include a forum for headquarters and mission libraries to share common issues and best practices.
- HQ Library will explore the possibility of a more formalized resource sharing arrangement between mission libraries.

Review of the Library – Canadian Embassy, Tokyo

A review of library and related information services at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo was conducted between November 10 and November 17, 2003. This review was undertaken at the recommendation of the departmental Office of the Inspector General (SIX) as part of their regular inspection and audit of the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo, and as part of the audit of Department's Library Services. Staff from the Canadian Embassy were interviewed to obtain general feedback on perception and usage of library and information services. A previous review of the Embassy's information services was conducted in January 2000 by headquarters library (reference "Canadian Embassy - Tokyo, Review of Information Services", January 2000).

Currently there are several sections performing different information services within the Mission. These include traditional reference services provided by the Library, various media packs distributed by a number of different sections, and an information centre operated the Commercial Section.

The E.H. Norman Library, located in the basement (B2) of the Canadian Embassy, is currently staffed by two locally engaged staff (one LES 5 and one LES 4). It is open to the public from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, and for the last several months from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Saturdays. The Library supports the Embassy's role in promoting bilateral relations encompassing commercial, political, and cultural dimensions. The collection consists of approximately 15,000 books in English, French and Japanese related to a wide range of Canadian and Japanese subjects, as well as newspapers, journals and government documents. The Library also houses the 'Study in Canada' section, where information is provided about Canadian universities, colleges, and high schools.

General Observations and Recommendations:

Canadian mission libraries generally serve three major purposes for their missions:

- providing information about Canada to the host country
- providing information about the host country to mission staff
- serving a centralized public enquiries function

It should be noted however, that all mission libraries are unique, and the degree to which they are able to provide these services will depend on their particular circumstances.

The following observations and recommendations for the Library and other information services are grouped according to these three themes. This report will also review library operations.

1. Providing Information about Canada to Japan

Observations:

- The Library provides research and reference services to the Japanese community seeking information about or doing research on Canada.
- The Library has an impressive Canadian collection for its size, and is noted for being the largest resource for Canadian Studies in Japan. The collection size is approximately 15,000 items (print, microform, music CDs and videos) and is comprised of reference works, books, documents and periodicals.
- The collection is available for circulation to registered patrons. Patrons can also use the resources for research on Canadian topics, and a photocopier is available for patron use (cost is ten yen per copy). Six computers are available for patrons doing internet research on Canada. The Library Online Public Access Catalogue, which provides access to the bibliographic records for the holdings of all departmental libraries, is available through these terminals. Two stations are also available for patrons viewing videos from the video collection.
- The local Japanese Association for Canadian Studies (JACS) values the wealth of information available through the Embassy library and the fact that the collection is open to the public for research and lending. The Association is very active, and has four regional branches in Japan. There are approximately 350 members, comprised of university professors, graduate students, government officials, journalists and business people. This group represents a significant portion of the Library's clients.

- The current president of JACS noted that space is a major issue for Japanese libraries who are not able to actively collect or accept large donations of materials from other repositories. The extended Saturday hours was also noted as a valuable addition to services.
- The 'Study in Canada' section, co-located in the Library, accounts for approximately 60% of the traffic to the Library. The library staff maintains and organizes this collection on behalf of the Mission, and this occupies approximately 10 -15% of their time. Reporting to the person responsible for Education Marketing, an education counsellor is also on-hand in the Library on a part-time basis to advise Japanese students on studying in Canada. Her hours are Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, during which time she provides group counselling sessions as well as individual sessions. She reports that Saturdays are her busiest period. A separate room for consultation has also been set aside in the Library for her use.
- The co-location of the 'Study in Canada' Section within the Library has positive benefits for the Library, the Section, and equally importantly, for the clients. This allows the clients to benefit from access to two unique resource collections.
- While the Japanese version of the Embassy web site provides a direct link to the Library's catalogue, this is not true of the English and French versions of the web site.
- The recently developed Octel telephone answering system provides a complex and circuitous route to the Library. The Library is mentioned in a few places, but nowhere on the opening menu. For instance, one Octel option has the fax and e-mail information for the Library buried under Public Affairs, which itself is under 'general contact information' (option seven). Another option has the Library listed under option eight, 'any other information'. In neither case is the patron offered a direct link to the Library, but even when they do get down to the library option, they are not given the telephone number to the reference and circulation desk. They are given the option of fax and e-mail contact information.

Recommendations:

- To assist with collection development, the Library should seek regular and formalized input from scholarly organizations such as JACS, as well as from mission staff.
- Stronger ties with JACS would allow the Library to make informed acquisition decisions based on what resources are available at other institutions, and thereby ensuring that they are not purchasing resources that are readily available elsewhere in Japan.

- The current print collection should continue to be maintained and weeded as required. The collection is relied upon by Japanese clientele doing research on Canada and related issues. The collection provides a depth of information that is not available through the Internet.
- The Library should ensure that all mission staff (particularly those that deal directly with the public) are made aware of what library services are available to them and the public. This could be facilitated by distributing more widely the current information sheet on the E.H. Norman Library, and/or producing a bookmark outlining library services. These marketing tools should be distributed to all mission staff as well as being available at the Embassy's public access points. The Library is well placed and prepared to serve the Japanese community with general enquiries about Canada.
- The Library should have a more prominent presence on the Mission's English and French web sites.
- At the end of our review in November, we had suggested that the Library should be a more obvious choice on the Octel telephone answering system. In February we tried the Octel system from Ottawa and were pleased to see that the Library is now listed under Option Six: 'Culture, Study in Canada, General Information, Media Relations and Library'. When we called, the Library was closed, so we were directed to leave a message, or fax the request. We are assuming that when the Library is open, callers will be able to speak to whoever is on duty at the circulation desk. One further improvement to this would be to provide the Library's direct telephone number when the caller reaches the Library's voice mail so that if a patron prefers to try again later, they do not need to go through the multi-option Octel route to get to the Library.

2. Providing Information about Japan to Mission Staff

Observations:

- Generally library services to mission staff are limited to routing periodicals, occasionally loaning materials, and ordering resources (e.g. periodicals, newspapers, books) on behalf of mission staff.
- The Library does not provide extensive reference services to the staff of the Embassy on a regular basis. Some other mission libraries (e.g. New York) play a bigger role in supporting mission staff and their research needs, however this does not appear to have ever been part of the mandate of the Tokyo Embassy library. Mission staff generally accept the level of service available to them through the Library.

- There are currently several sections within the Embassy producing media information packs. While these packs provide a useful service to the mission staff, there is a great deal of confusion surrounding them. There is no consistency as to format, coverage, or content, and in some cases, staff are not even aware of their existence. Further, there are differing views as to their continued usefulness. Some felt the packs should be discontinued in light of all the desktop information resources directly available to staff through the Virtual Library, while others, particularly those covering a wide spectrum of issues and topics, indicated that they found the packs to be a valuable time saver.

Recommendations:

- By virtue of their training and skill set, librarians are well positioned to provide research services and guidance on the use of desktop information tools. An expanded role for the Library in providing reference and coaching to staff is certainly something the Mission could consider working towards, however, the Library does not currently have the resources to provide this service. The Library is staffed by two non-professionals who have no formal library training, although the current head of the Library has worked there since 1979, and his assistant has approximately five years of experience working at the Embassy's fourth floor reception desk.
- The library staff should be given in-depth training on the Virtual Library to enable them to provide more assistance to mission staff. It would be beneficial for the Mission to have some in-house expertise, albeit first level, and the mission library would be a logical place for this expertise to reside. Once properly trained, library staff could provide individual coaching on an ad hoc basis, and also group coaching sessions on a regular basis. This increased knowledge of the Virtual Library would also make library staff better able to answer more reference questions for the Mission. The current assistant librarian has expressed an interest in taking on this role.
- The media packs should not be discontinued without a thorough review. The packs should be evaluated against the electronic resources available to all staff through their desktop, particularly the Virtual Library, and other information resources subscribed to by the Mission. Topics and information sources should be reviewed to determine whether they lend themselves to this sort of pack, or whether they could more efficiently be tracked on an individual basis. Language issues and the nature of some topics and sources could mean that they are best done centrally. It should be noted that attention will have to be paid to licencing restrictions that may apply to any of the sources. The goal is to ensure that the information needs of the staff are covered as efficiently and effectively as possible, regardless of where the information is coming from.

- Ideally all media packs should be produced and co-ordinated through one section. If this is not feasible, it is important that the producers of the media packs co-ordinate and communicate with each other regularly. All the different groups should meet initially to establish who is responsible for what so as to avoid unnecessary duplication, and to agree upon a service standard that ensures such things as the timeliness, consistency of format and quality of the packs. For example, the format of the packs should be such that they are easy and quick to scan. They should continue to meet on a regular if infrequent basis to ensure the continued uniformity, consistency, quality and continued relevance of the packs.
- Staff should be made aware of all available media packs, so that they can choose which they would like to receive. The Library should receive a copy of all packs which they should regularly scan, so that they maintain an awareness of what issues are of importance to the mission staff. This may provide them with guidance when choosing resources to purchase for the Library, as well as when they are answering reference queries for mission staff.
- The Mission should also consider setting up group folders on Factiva. This could initially be done with the assistance of the Portfolio Librarian for Asia-Pacific, but could eventually be administered in-house. This would provide uniform access, standardized format, and help streamline the production of the media packs by reducing the amount of daily staff time and effort that is involved in the creation of the packs. It should be noted though, that for sources not available through Factiva, it will still be necessary to produce some of the media packs to cover these other resources.

3. Serving a Centralized Public Enquiries Function

Observations:

- The centralized public enquiries function is served by the Octel system and the fourth floor reception desk. The Library and the new Information Centre also contribute to this process.
- The Information Centre concept is still evolving, and some confusion exists as to which group is to answer which type of enquiry and for which client.

Recommendations:

- There should be more co-ordination between the various units providing general information to the public. Although it is unlikely that the Library would ever fully assume the role of centralized public enquiries, there is scope for improving awareness among mission staff of what the Library can do for the public. As was mentioned earlier, marketing tools such as pamphlets, bookmarks, and a

stronger presence on the Embassy web site and Octel system would help to create awareness and knowledge of the potential of the Library.

- Trade's new Information Centre should be named the Trade Information Centre to avoid confusion for both mission staff and clients, and thus reduce the likelihood of their receiving the more general questions that could be answered by the Library, and vice versa. This change should be reflected in the Octel system.
- Managers from both Trade and PERPA should meet to establish what the mandates of the Library and trade's new Information Centre should be, including levels of service and types of enquiries to be handled by each. For example, with the resources it has, the Library is in a good position to answer many general enquiries from the public, possibly even some basic trade questions, thereby freeing the Information Centre staff for more complex and value-added trade queries. To ensure continued coordination between the two service points, the staff of the Library and the Information Centre should continue to meet on a regular if infrequent basis. Headquarters library would be pleased to assist with this process.

4. Library Operations – Canadian Embassy, Tokyo

Observations:

- Library staff are committed to providing quality library service, however because of the many changes in the library management structure during the past few years, some library services and activities have been uneven. Now that a library management structure has been put in place, roles and job descriptions need to be sorted out.
- Collection development is one of the activities that has been uneven as a result of the staff turnover. The current head of the library, a library employee since 1989, has now begun to take on these duties.
- While the Library's budget has felt the impact of recent cuts, there is no requirement to reduce their space allocation and re-assign it to other program areas. The Library's current budget primarily covers acquisitions, some of which are purchased for retention by officers. Library clients are not charged for services, except for clients from the public who are charged for photocopying. This is administered by a private company which handles all aspects relating to the photocopy machine.
- The Library currently has three systems for 'tracking' library users: a patron registration form, a library sign-in sheet located at the circulation desk, and an automatic counter located at the entrance to the Library. There seems to be

some confusion as to what each system is measuring, and therefore in the number of people actually using the Library. Library staff confirmed that the patron registration sheets are used largely for those who are registering to borrow materials, and there is not a record for every client using the Library. They also noted that not every visitor to the Library, particularly those using the 'Study in Canada' section, actually sign in on the sign-in sheet. This was attributed to the placement of the sign-in sheet at the circulation desk, as it is located well away from the entrance to the Library and from the 'Study in Canada' section.

- The counter is not providing an accurate picture of how many people entering the Library are actually library clients. Since the counter tracks every entry into the Library, it also records library staff and cleaning staff for example. This causes a discrepancy between the counter number and the number of people who have signed in as visitors to the library facility. An additional problem with the counter is that it appeared to be malfunctioning. Periodic tests conducted during our stay indicated a discrepancy as to whether people were counted when entering or leaving the Library. It seemed to occasionally switch back and forth.
- Recently the hours of operation of the Library were extended, and they are now open to the public on Saturdays, as is the 'Study in Canada' section. The library staff report that this change appears to be appreciated by clients, and the 'Study in Canada' counsellor says that Saturday is her busiest day for counselling sessions. This has also necessitated a shift in hours for the library staff to accommodate this extended service.
- Although a reference sheet is filled out for clients, it should be fine-tuned to collect more in-depth information. This would allow for analysis on collection usage, clientele, peak periods, subject areas, etc., which could be used for further developing or justifying the library collection and its services. Similarly, no information was being recorded about sources consulted in the Library prior to their being re-shelved, and thus there was no concrete data on this important aspect of collection usage. We discussed this with the Head Librarian, and he then took the initiative of devising a sheet to record basic information about materials being consulted in the Library. This activity should be continued for the valuable information it contributes to understanding how the collection is used.
- The physical location of the Library in the basement makes it rather isolated from the rest of the Mission. This presents security issues, and is also a challenge to library staff in terms of communication and teamwork opportunities with other mission staff. The Embassy is aware of these issues of isolation and security, and have installed a security camera, an emergency button on the circulation desk telephone, and instituted periodic visits by a security officer.

- Some library materials are housed on the top of the shelves because of space limitations. These top shelves are not designed for this purpose, as there are no end panels to secure the materials. This poses a potentially dangerous situation as materials could fall from these shelves, injuring staff and/or clients, as well as damaging the materials.
- Back-issues of periodicals and documents are currently housed on a second floor level 'gallery' in the Library, accessible by a circular metal staircase. The metal staircase has sharp edges and poses a danger of which library staff is aware. They have taken measures to ensure clients do not use the stairs and steer clear of the area by placing temporary barriers at the base of the staircase.
- The Library has six boxes of personal papers and documents pertaining to Herbert Norman, some of which appear to be photocopies. This collection was donated to the Embassy by Genji Okubo, his assistant and is currently housed, unarranged, in boxes in the Library's storage area. Also in the Library's storage are various photographs of Mr. Norman and a collection of departmental files pertaining to the Chancery. Two of these departmental files are entitled "Building Project - Chancery Extension" (dating from December 1949 to September 1954, and February 1955 to November 1955), and the third file is entitled "Canadian Liaison Mission - Purchase of Land Adjoining Legation" (dated July 1949 to May 1953).

Recommendations:

- Embassy management, in consultation with library staff, should formally articulate policies on issues such as the mission of the Library, standards for services provided to both external and internal clientele, collection development, and marketing and communication strategy. Now that the staffing situation in the Library has been stabilized, it would be an opportune time for Embassy management to consider whether library staff could do more than they are currently doing for mission staff. For instance, they could play an expanded role in providing reference and coaching on Virtual Library resources. Once this has been decided, job descriptions should be updated to reflect new duties. Any new services should be communicated to mission staff, and also highlighted on marketing materials.
- Because of limited budget and space, the Library should have a focussed collection development plan to ensure that collection activities reflect the research needs of the target audience. As mentioned previously, this should be done in conjunction with embassy management.
- The two library staff should hold meetings at least fortnightly to discuss ongoing library issues such as current reference topics, acquisitions, marketing, statistics, task allocation, etc. Special emphasis should be placed on discussing collection

development issues, for example, which titles are on order and subject areas that need strengthening.

- More consideration should be given to the collecting and recording of information and statistics on library clients than is currently being done through the visitor sign-in sheet and the library registration record. The main reasons for collecting and recording this information is to: determine how many clients visit the Library; determine how they are using the Library; have a record of major library users; and of equal importance to ensure that material being loaned to outside clients is well accounted for. These last two reasons require different and more detailed information about clients than do the first two.
- The visitor sign-in sheet should be placed near the entrance to the Library where it is easily visible and accessible to all visitors - whether visitors to the Library or to the 'Study in Canada' collection. The current sheet records visitor name, address and telephone number. For privacy issues and simplification for clients, addresses and telephone numbers should be removed from this list. If this information is necessary, it should be confined to the library registration record which is kept behind the circulation desk. What would be useful to know on the sign-in sheet is, in addition to client name, the date and time of their visit (to help determine when peak periods of activity occur) and whether they are using the 'Study in Canada' collection or the Library's collection. Mission staff should be able to simply check off which program area they are from, so that this useful information can be recorded with minimal effort on their part. If this visitor information is consistently recorded, it is probably not necessary to have the counter, which in any case cannot meaningfully isolate information about groups of clients coming to the Library.
- In order to simplify the analysis of their statistics, the Library should record their reference requests electronically. Headquarters library has already customized for mission libraries a client tracking software package (Remedy) that electronically records statistical information. The information gathered could easily be used for generating management reports which would show usage by subject, client type, etc. Ideally the reference requests should be entered directly into Remedy, however if this is not practical, library staff could continue to record questions on paper, and at the end of each day enter the information into the database.
- Better statistics on collection usage, obtainable through recording which materials are being re-shelved, reference, and interlibrary loan activities, would help to rationalize the collection and better identify subject areas that are used and/or are important to clients, or areas that need enhancements. This would also provide much-needed information for purposes of weeding the collection, thereby reducing the space requirements and ensuring that all materials can be

safely stored on the designated shelves and not on the top of the shelving units, or in the second level gallery.

- Consideration should be given to finding a permanent solution to the danger posed by the circular staircase and gallery. Regardless of whether the gallery is removed or no longer used, the storage area located at the back of the Library, should be refitted with shelving to provide additional accessible storage for library materials. This new location could be reflected in the bibliographic records on the OPAC as 'Storage'. Similarly materials currently housed on the top shelves of the stacks should be removed for safety reasons. These materials should be integrated into the collection, however, to accommodate this, it might be necessary to shift the collection, and weed duplicate or unused materials. The refitting of the storage area at the back of the Library would also facilitate this activity.
- There are definitely opportunities to streamline workflow in the Library. For example, new material ordered through Ottawa could be catalogued before being shipped to Tokyo, which ensures that the books are available to clients sooner.
- In our initial report in November, we recommended that even though many of the Norman papers appear to be photocopies, the Mission should consult with a professional Canadian archivist or historian to determine the potential historical value of the material. We have since been informed by the Mission that they have discussed this collection with the head of the Department's Historical Section. We would also suggest that they do the same for the related photographs as well as the files about the Embassy, if they have not already done so.

5. Library Operations – Ottawa

Observations:

- The mission library uses the headquarters library in Ottawa for support in the acquisition and cataloguing of its materials, and technical support for its online public access catalogue and related modules. The headquarters library is occasionally used for reference requests as needed. Current and past mission library staff have benefited from training sessions hosted by the Ottawa library (e.g. VL systems, and cataloguing).
- Library staff have said that they would welcome more training and resource sharing opportunities with headquarters library.
- The Information Management and Technology Bureau has provided several on-site awareness and coaching sessions on the Virtual Library at the Embassy. Embassy staff interviewed were aware of and appreciative of the departmental

Virtual Library. Actual usage of the Virtual Library by Embassy staff varied depending upon job requirements and whether they had attended one of the training sessions. Interest was expressed in having headquarters library staff provide on-site training and coaching, as well as distance learning initiatives.

Recommendations:

- Headquarters library will seek funding from the Information Management and Technology Bureau to conduct a pilot to provide select Canadian electronic resources to mission libraries for access by their non-departmental clients.
- Headquarters library is planning to develop a discussion forum for its website to promote dialogue among departmental users. We would like to develop it to include a forum for headquarters and mission libraries to share common issues and best practices.
- Headquarters library would also like to host another Mission Library Conference in Ottawa early next fiscal year. The Mission has already expressed an interest in sending the assistant librarian.
- Headquarters library is always pleased to provide coaching assistance on the Virtual Library, including remote coaching using a combination of shadowing and video conferencing, as well as on-site visits to missions as resources permit. To this end, the Portfolio Librarian for Asia Pacific has arranged to provide remote shadowing sessions for both library staff. This service is also available to all other mission staff.
- The Portfolio Librarian for Asia Pacific should work with designated representatives (e.g. producers of the media packs) to formulate Factiva group folders. She could also work with Embassy staff to set up tracks on Factiva to monitor issues specific to their jobs.
- After discussions with the Manager and Coordinator for the Embassy's Learning Initiative, the headquarters library will pilot its new computer-based distance training "Finding Information For Competitive Intelligence" with interested mission staff.