



**AUDIT
OF
THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION
NEW DELHI
AND OFFICES IN
MUMBAI, BANGALORE, CHANDIGARH**

JUNE 2004

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
Office of the Inspector General
Audit Division (SIV)**

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TABLE OF CONTENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
MANAGEMENT OF THE MISSION	3
1.1 Overview	3
1.2 Mapping the Future	3
1.3 Role of the Deputy High Commissioner	3
1.4 Management Committees	4
1.5 Staff Well-being	5
1.6 MUMBAI	5
1.7 CHANDIGARH	9
GENERAL RELATIONS	11
2.1 Overview	11
2.2 Planning, Priorities and Workloads	11
2.3 Public Affairs	13
2.4 Job Descriptions and Reclassifications	13
2.5 Academic Relations	13
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	14
3.1 Overview	14
3.2 Management	14
3.3 Country Strategy	15
3.4 Reporting Relationship	16
3.5 Planning	17
3.6 New Approach	18
3.7 Resources	19
CONSULAR PROGRAM	21
4.1 Management of the Program	21
4.2 Service to Canadians	22
4.3 Passports and Citizenship	23
ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM	24
5.1 Management of the Program	24
5.2 Human Resources	25
5.3 Physical Resources	31
5.4 Finance	34
5.5 Information Management and Technology	40
APPENDIX A	42
RESOURCES FACT SHEET	42

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of the General Relations, the International Business Development, the Consular and the Administration Programs was conducted in New Delhi from April 22 to May 6, 2003. The Mumbai, Bangalore and Chandigarh offices were also visited during this time. A previous audit took place in November 1998.

The Missions in India have very capably responded to the re-engagement of bilateral relations in 2000 and now face increasing pressures with the official upgrading of India as a priority country for Canada. The number of visits across all programs has been high, the economy and therefore trade are expanding rapidly, and sensitive political issues continue to dominate bilateral relations.

Mission management is composed of a very experienced and capable team with a HOM who fosters effective communication and teamwork, provides the appropriate level of support to programs and has managed to integrate Mission and program priorities and efforts. Morale is good. Relations with staff have improved since the last audit, with more effective communication and engagement.

All Mission programs are well managed and operating effectively. The biggest challenge is resource pressure and the ability to deliver program services throughout India. Development of an India Strategy is recommended to determine optimal resource levels, locations and delivery models. Notwithstanding a new strategy, the Mission would benefit from greater integration of the Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) in the delivery of the General Relations Program and in coordinating activities between offices and the High Commission. The Mission would also benefit from the creation of a resident trade presence in Chennai; upgrading the office in Mumbai to a Consulate General; and the implementation of the VAC (Visa Application Centre) project proposed by the CIC Program.

The IBD Program is well managed with experienced officers in both New Delhi and Mumbai. A reorganization of sector responsibilities has been positive. With the development of a new country strategy, attention needs to focus on realigning resource distribution from New Delhi to other emerging and existing economic centres. The reporting relationship of Mumbai needs to be clarified and include clear accountability measures. More rigour and consistency of planning between offices are also recommended as well as the establishment of an InfoCentre, use of Business Mission Agreements and consistent classification of commercial assistant positions.

The Administration and the Consular Programs are well managed and resourced with effective delegation of responsibility to staff and oversight by supervisors and PMs. More formal accountability agreements for sectional supervisors would enhance existing accountabilities and development of service standards would clarify roles and expectations regarding services provided.

A total of 50 audit recommendations are raised in the report; 48 are addressed to the Mission and two are addressed to Headquarters (HQ). Management has responded to each recommendation indicating action already taken or decisions made, as well as future action. Of the 50 recommendations, management has stated that 39 recommendations have been implemented. For each of the remaining 11 recommendations, management has indicated the initiatives in progress or the intended future action.

MANAGEMENT OF THE MISSION

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 New Delhi is a very well managed mission. All its programs were found to be well managed as were the offices in Mumbai, Bangalore and Chandigarh. New Delhi is one of our largest Missions, with 344 staff, and operates in a complex and often very difficult environment.

1.2 Mapping the Future

1.2.1 The recent designation of India as a priority country for Canada, the increasing number of visits since re-engagement, and the expanding points of service in India call for the development of both an “India strategy and country plan”. This exercise would ensure that the Mission’s vision and priorities for the short and medium term are in line with HQs’ and DFAIT’s priorities and that these priorities are operationalized in a co-ordinated fashion by the offices in India. This exercise would also examine Canada’s presence in India and adjust the number and size of offices to match the strategy.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.2.2 In coordination with the geographic bureau and other interested HQ units, develop an India strategy and country plan.

Mission Action and Time Frame

1.2.2 The Prime Ministers of Canada and India have now agreed to a joint statement of cooperation which will guide our program of action for the next year. A mission plan has been prepared and approved by the geographic bureau.

1.3 Role of the Deputy High Commissioner

1.3.1 The role of the DHC needs to be defined with greater precision. The role of the position has changed with each incumbent and with each change of HOM. For example, some DHCs focus more on management issues, while others focussed more on the Political Program (including managing some files and reporting on issues). The shift in role from one DHC to another has the equivalent resource impact as an FTE cut or addition to the General Relations Program. While the role of the DHC is significantly influenced by the role adopted by the HOM, at this juncture there should be consideration given to the DHC assuming a role in the General Relations Program given the great demands on the program.

1.3.2 With the number of offices in India set to expand and with growth expected in some of those offices, ensuring that excellent communications between New Delhi and each office and among the offices continue will be a challenge. Further, keeping all the offices and their programs coordinated, with clear and complementary mandates, will also be a challenge. The DHC position could be ideally suited to assuming a country program coordination role.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.3.3 Review the role of the DHC with a view to focussing it on the Mission's pressure points - currently the General Relations Program and office coordination.

Mission Action and Time Frame

1.3.3 The Deputy High Commissioner's position will concentrate on coordinating the PERPA Program in the months ahead but will be able to support other programs in times of particular pressure.

1.4 Management Committees

1.4.1 Generally missions of this large size have two CMM type committees. One includes all Program Managers (PMs) and perhaps other senior CBS and is designed to discuss administrative issues, visits, and issues affecting multiple programs. Mumbai and Chandigarh Heads of office could participate in these meetings by speaker phone. An appropriate version of the minutes/record of decision could be circulated to all staff. A second committee including DFAIT PMs with CIC and perhaps CIDA PMs could meet as an executive committee to discuss issues that are more strategic in nature.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.4.2 Review the Mission's management committee structure to ensure they support both the operating and strategic needs of the Mission.

Mission Action and Time Frame

1.4.2 As soon as Chandigarh is fully staffed and communications problems with Mumbai are resolved, we will create a Country Team Committee which will hold weekly conference calls to address issues of strategic planning and broad general interest.

1.5 Staff Well-being

1.5.1 Morale at the mission is good and significantly improved since our last visit. Relations between CBS and LES have also much improved and the LES Committee indicated that there is much good will with management and issues that do arise are resolved. The HOM and his management team have worked to improve communications and it shows.

1.5.2 Discussions with LES did indicate a lack of awareness of “helper” units in HQ. The HOM may wish to send a message advising staff that he and his team are always available to discuss problems and that services provided by units such as the Employee Assistance Program, the Ombudsman, Disclosure Office, Staff Relations and the Office of the Inspector General are available to CBS and LES alike.

Recommendation for the Mission

1.5.3 Advise staff periodically of the helper units within HQ that are available to provide assistance and how these units can be reached.

Mission Action and Time Frame

1.5.3 EAP support is coming to the Mission from CIC in June 2004 and the whole Mission is to benefit from this visit. An e-mail to all staff (CBS/LES) at Mission and in satellite offices will follow at the end of June.

1.6 MUMBAI

1.6.1 The Mumbai Mission is a well-managed one. The Mission is well led and functions at a high level, at a fast pace, with an impressive team of two CBS and ten LES. The office in Bangalore, staffed by two LES, is a sub-office of Mumbai. As in New Delhi, re-engagement has added work and visitor workload has increased significantly. The Mission views this pace as not sustainable. Mumbai also faces the same hurdles as New Delhi with 9/11, regional tensions, the Iraq conflict and SARs files hampering program delivery. There are some inter-office tensions and some friction with New Delhi but these do not generally impact on performance - staff view the Mission to be at its happiest and best when busy and not distracted by office politics.

1.6.2 Visa issues remain a frustration for the Office and colours relationships with its key contacts, in particular in the business community. 80% of all calls received by Mumbai are visa related. The US, UK and Australia all have more client-friendly visa services in place in Mumbai. The Visa Application Centre project and the possible resumption of interviews in the fall in Mumbai by New Delhi staff will certainly improve the situation. DFAIT, however, will need to discuss further with CIC the notion of CIC

presence in Mumbai, in particular if the Office is upgraded to a Consulate General. The opening of an office in Chandigarh will also add to client pressure regarding service differences between north and south India.

1.6.3 At present, Mumbai reports to New Delhi through the Trade PM in New Delhi. Given that Mumbai is a multi-program Mission, this reporting relationship to New Delhi may no longer be logical and needs to be reviewed. Consideration should be given to changing the reporting relationship to the DHC.

1.6.4 The New Delhi-Mumbai Hub and Spoke arrangement is one of the best we have encountered and we see it as a best practice. There is both clarity of roles and acceptance of roles. New Delhi's administrative and consular units are interested in the Spoke, have a client service mentality and are forceful in the delivery of the programs and services. Mumbai willingly and successfully focusses on other program delivery.

1.6.5 The New Delhi-Mumbai MOU is a very good one but since it focusses on administration issues, it needs to be broadened. It now focusses on New Delhi's roles and responsibilities but it should also set out Mumbai's. The MOU would also be more effective if it included service standards.

Recommendation for the New Delhi Mission

1.6.6 In conjunction with Mumbai, develop a full coverage MOU and embed service standards therein.

New Delhi Mission Action and Time Frame

1.6.6 Will be completed by June 30, 2004.

1.6.7 To further enhance good communications, both New Delhi and Mumbai would benefit if the consul participated by speaker phone on New Delhi's CMM/Coordination Committees. Remote participation has worked successfully in a number of missions.

Recommendation for the New Delhi Mission

1.6.8 Encourage Mumbai's participation, through speaker phone, in CMM and Coordination Committees.

New Delhi Mission Action and Time Frame

1.6.8 Video conferencing will begin April 2004.

1.6.9 The Consular Program in Mumbai is managed from New Delhi and executed in Mumbai by an LES consular assistant who reports to the Junior CBS position. The program has an excellent reputation for service but management is concerned that Mumbai has not kept up with its support systems, especially with COSMOS. At the time of audit, New Delhi and Mumbai were in the midst of succession planning regarding the consular assistant.

1.6.10 Mumbai is well served administratively. The Mumbai end of the administration team is well managed.

1.6.11 A number of issues require attention or follow-up, some with the assistance of New Delhi:

- There may be some confusion on who is responsible for Section 34 sign-offs on Mumbai expenditures or there may be a double Section 34;
- Mumbai should develop a training plan flowing from the appraisals of its staff;
- Mumbai, as a small mission, should cross-train staff whenever possible;
- Mumbai and some LES have raised the need to review the classifications of positions. A classification committee, with New Delhi's participation should, be struck for this task;
- Independent access to the office has been granted to some but not all LES, apparently as a result of limitations in security hardware. This situation should be reviewed to ensure an equitable solution can be found.

Recommendations for the Mumbai Mission

1.6.12 Review Section 34 authorities, with New Delhi, to ensure there is no duplication of effort.

1.6.13 Develop a training plan for all staff.

1.6.14 Staff should be cross-trained.

1.6.15 Review and update job descriptions that are viewed as out dated and submit them to New Delhi's Classification Committee for review.

1.6.16 With the Security Manager in New Delhi, review and rationalize LES access to the office.

Mumbai Mission Actions and Time Frames

1.6.12 Implemented.

1.6.13 Implemented.

1.6.14 We have started by having one of the receptionists take a consular course and replacing consular assistants in their absence.

1.6.15 Completed. Review of CIC job descriptions is pending recommendations from CIC HQ.

1.6.16 Completed. August 2003.

1.6.17 Should the Mission be expanded or upgraded to a Consulate General, consideration should be given to conducting a full property study. Some consulates have migrated towards the airport to avoid downtown congestion. The real estate market has softened which also may provide more attractive opportunities.

1.6.18 Our meetings with the LES revealed that Mumbai is a very busy but happy Mission. Visits workload was a concern to all staff. Lack of visa services was also raised as a concern in that it was perceived to affect programs and that it was an irritant at all levels. Administrative and human resource matters were discussed in both Mumbai and New Delhi and some human resource issues were brought to the attention of HRL for consideration in future pay and benefit exercises.

1.6.19 The Trade Section is functioning well under the leadership of the STC who is supported by a junior officer and an impressive team of experienced Commercial Officers and Assistants. As Mumbai is the business capital of India the program is stretched particularly during times of intensive visits and missions. More rigour is required in establishing plans for the program and setting objectives for individual staff. Objectives and related plans are based primarily on discussions between staff and management as are follow-up and assessment of results. New Delhi and Mumbai are not coordinated to the extent they should be, including the issue of reporting relationship that is previously discussed in this report. To better balance workload more use is required of Business Mission Agreements (BMAs) and more focus is required on proactive activities versus reactive.

Bangalore

1.6.20 Bangalore is a model operation as a satellite office reporting to Mumbai. Two LES employees operate a dynamic, well administered and cost effective (\$60,000) trade office. The office has developed goals and objectives with established plans in place that show a strategic approach to identifying initiatives and related measures. There is good coordination of activities and initiatives with Mumbai for program purposes and with New Delhi for administrative support. Expansion of this model to other centres would provide good value-added in relation to the costs required but is dependent on oversight and support of the Hub Mission(s).

1.7 CHANDIGARH

1.7.1 The Office of the Canadian High Commission in Chandigarh was opened in 1996 to provide minimal trade and Consular services, as well as general information to visa clients. Significant changes are taking place in the Office following an announcement made by the Prime Minister in August 2002 to upgrade Chandigarh's status to full Consulate General. This expansion will allow for a second point of visa service in India and result in a Consul General, three CB visa officers, a CB administration officer and several LES positions being added to the Mission. At the time of our visit, this Mission had seven LES on staff, including an LE-09 Office Manager/Immigration Specialist and an LE-09 Trade Advisor. Both report to Program Managers in New Delhi. These Officers have no Accountability Agreements with the Program Managers nor have they been given any specific goals and objectives.

1.7.2 The LE-09 Officers are mature and professional employees having each joined the Mission in 1997. There are shortcomings, however, in that there is no one designated individual in charge of the Office ***. This issue will be redressed with the arrival of the new Canada-based employees.

1.7.3 There currently is no Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Chandigarh and New Delhi spelling out the role and responsibilities of each Mission. Chandigarh is highly satisfied with the direction and services it receives from New Delhi. New Delhi has an MOU with Mumbai as it applies to consular and administration and a similar document for Chandigarh would be beneficial in ensuring clarity of responsibilities between both parties. The MCO is planning to develop such a document. New Delhi Immigration, Trade and Administration staff do make regular visits to Chandigarh and, as well, the two Chandigarh Officers are regular visitors to the New Delhi Mission.

Recommendations for the New Delhi Mission

1.7.4 Accountability Agreements should be established for the LES Officers in Chandigarh identifying in measurable terms the goals and objectives expected of these Officers.

1.7.5 A Memorandum of Understanding should be developed between New Delhi and the Chandigarh Mission spelling out the specific role and responsibilities of each party.

New Delhi Mission Actions and Time Frames

1.7.4 This issue has been addressed with the arrival of CBS staff to Chandigarh.

1.7.5 Will be completed by April 2004.

1.7.6 New Delhi's Property Section has spent considerable time in Chandigarh dealing with the acquisition of new office space and staff quarters (SQs) to house the Canada-based staff. New office space has been leased but the building will require a complete retrofit to bring it to acceptable standards. Construction was only beginning at the time of our visit and was expected to be completed towards the end of calendar year 2003. Warehouse space has also been leased to store generator, furniture and furnishings and other equipment which are required for the fit-up of the new Chancery.

1.7.7 The Property Section has done a highly commendable job in finding and leasing suitable housing. Three staff quarters (SQs) have already been leased and retrofitted and the Section was in the final negotiation stage of leasing a duplex (up and down) for use by CIC Officers from New Delhi who visit the Mission weekly on temporary duty. A potential Official Residence was also being looked at. It is not expected that the new Consul General will arrive until early in 2004.

1.7.8 Financially, the Mission operates with a petty cash fund to pay minor bills. Other invoices such as electricity, telephone, contractor payments, renovations and purchases beyond INR 3,000 are couriered to New Delhi's Finance Section for payment. Drafts are returned to the Chandigarh Mission for disbursement to the suppliers. Turnaround time for payment is about 10 days. New Delhi is also paying office rent directly to the City who has re-possessed the current building because of a dispute with the landlord. New Delhi should explore the notion of paying suppliers directly rather than returning the drafts to the Chandigarh Mission for disbursement. There is no revenue collected.

1.7.9 Currently, the Mission is equipped with eight computers and one printer. One PC is equipped with a modem with others being stand-computers connected through a LAN which allows each one to access internet through a local service provider. All computer equipment and furniture are inventoried.

GENERAL RELATIONS

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The last few years, since re-engagement, have been extremely busy for the Mission. In particular, the visits workload has been all-consuming. India has now been included in the Department's list of twelve priority Missions and this will no doubt result in an increased workload. As with the rest of the Mission, the impacts of 9/11, the nuclear file, regional tensions, SARs and the Iraq conflict have impacted on the program effectiveness.

2.1.2 The Mission is seeking more resources, and while these resources appear warranted, we, nevertheless, recommend that a formal business case be put together for HQ review.

2.1.3 The Political/Economic Program now functions with two CBS, an LE-09, an LE-06 and an Ex-patriate LE-06 now shared with Public Affairs. The Ex-patriate position will become 100% allocated to Political/Economic by autumn.

2.2 Planning, Priorities and Workloads

2.2.1 The Mission has a clear idea of its reporting priorities through dialogue with HQ and its internal allocation of files is clear. It is rare that HQ and a mission have as clear an understanding of priorities and both parties should be commended.

2.2.2 At the time of the audit visit, the program was developing its work plan. The Mission's workload has increased significantly since re-engagement, led by the visit-generated workload but also through an increased range of reporting. Mission plans were not yet developed to focus on resource allocation or on results for each priority item. Therefore, it is difficult to assess resource needs and workloads, and difficult to allocate resources among competing priorities. More "science" is required in the planning process in order to make an effective business case for more resources. While new Canada-based resources are no doubt the preferred option for the Mission, especially given its new status as a priority country, part of the resource equation should be to assess the use of current resources. Among the options for consideration are:

- Redefining the role of the DHC. The role has changed with each DHC and HOM. In the past, some DHCs have taken an active role in the General Relations Program. Consideration should be given to making the DHC position much more hands-on in this program, including carrying reporting files.
- A second option would entail the examination of the Public Affairs PM's position with a view to allocating a portion of his time to Political/Economic. For example, the program may benefit if 50% of his time was so allocated,

and the Public Affairs Program could then be back-filled with one and perhaps two LES Officers (LES are still hired at a comparably low cost).

2.2.3 LES resource usage should also be reviewed:

- The Senior Political Analyst (LE-09) is highly regarded but is used primarily as a researcher and media analyst. To lessen the burden of the CBS, consideration should be given to assigning a reporting portfolio to the analyst. This would also allow the analyst to have a proactive component to her workload.
- The Economic Analyst (LE-06) position needs to be rethought. It would appear that management expectations and tasking are inconsistent with the level of the position. It would also appear that some tasks are beyond what would normally be expected from an LE-06 position. Management should review its needs and then develop a job description to fit those needs.
- Each of the LES positions allocates 40% of its time to production of weekly reports (Weekly Report and Weekly Economic Report). This is a significant resource investment and management should validate that this is time well spent on products well used. Management should survey current users to determine if these products are “invaluable” or “nice-to-have”; and then, if required, adjust the depth and frequency of reporting accordingly.

Recommendations for the Mission

2.2.4 Develop a business case for more resources. As part of this case, consideration should be given to reallocating time from the DHC position and the Public Affairs PM position to the Political Program.

2.2.5 Review the tasking of the LES positions with a view to dropping low value-added work.

Mission Actions and Time Frames

2.2.4 Completed and sent to MDM August 2003.

2.2.5 Tasks for the LES were reviewed and changes have been implemented. Further review and evaluation of the tasking will be done during 2004.

2.3 Public Affairs

2.3.1 As with the Political Program, Public Affairs plans need to become more sophisticated, with ranked priorities, resources allocated to priorities and setting of expected outputs or outcomes. The Post Initiative Fund plan is one very important element of this process. The program consists of a CBS, a Public Affairs/Academic Affairs Assistant and a Press Officer.

2.3.2 The PM is on his first posting and brings much enthusiasm to the program. Consensus at the Mission is that the program requires greater focus and that the academic programs are in need of reinvigoration. The program is now keying on film, newspaper-to-newspaper links and trying to reach the general public in India as opposed to small groups.

2.3.3 While Public Affairs Programs are often event driven, some effort should be made to develop a proactive element to the program. For example, to promote the development of media contacts, the press officer could be allocated hospitality funds and be asked to make a given number of contacts over the next quarter.

2.4 Job Descriptions and Reclassifications

2.4.1 Job descriptions need to be reviewed and reassessed as a priority. Roles have evolved and with the planned creation of a full-time support position, lower valued work is expected to be dropped from the senior positions. The PM should also review the history of the press officer's classification, where promises may have been made by previous management and not kept. Press officer job descriptions should be acquired from other Missions as a guide to determining roles and levels.

Recommendation for the Mission

2.4.2 In light of evolving roles, review and update job descriptions for all position within the Public Affairs Program.

Mission Action and Time Frame

2.4.2 This was completed in February 2004.

2.5 Academic Relations

2.5.1 The program has identified the need to reinvigorate the relationship with some of its traditional local partners. In particular, the Indian Association for Canadian Studies and CEC will be the focus for the program in attempts to build more effective relationships.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The IBD Program in India is headed by an EX-02 PM. The PM is responsible for IBD operations in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chandigarh. In New Delhi, three Trade Commissioners (TC), managing separate teams, report to the PM. A Consul and Senior Trade Commissioner (STC) is responsible for the Consulate in Mumbai and reports to the PM in New Delhi. The Trade Office in Bangalore has one Commercial Officer (CO) and one Commercial Assistant (CA) reporting to the STC in Mumbai. In Chandigarh, a CO and a CA report to New Delhi. There is also an Honorary Consul located in Kolkata that does trade work. In total, there are 15 trade resources in New Delhi, six in Mumbai and two in Bangalore and in Chandigarh.

3.1.2 Important developments for the IBD Program in India are the acceleration of Canada's re-engagement effort and the upgrade of India to a priority country. Economic reforms begun in 1991 are now entering a new phase focussing on banking, insurance, telecommunications, labour, intellectual property, further deregulation and privatization. Two-way trade between Canada and India in 2000 reached \$2.6 billion, including \$754 million in exports to India.

3.1.3 From the program's perspective, the Indian market has been divided into two territories with offices concentrating on opportunities in their respective region. The Consulate in Mumbai and the Bangalore Trade Office are responsible for the region comprising the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala. New Delhi and Chandigarh cover the rest of India with New Delhi taking the lead on national issues, including Government relations and trade policy.

3.2 Management

3.2.1 The IBD Program is well managed in both New Delhi and Mumbai. The PM and STC are experienced officers who provide good direction and support to their staff. Communications and morale in both offices are good. Regular program meetings are held and there is frequent access by staff to their respective managers and TCs. Teamwork is good particularly when organizing events and supporting delegations. Appraisals are regularly completed for staff and training requests are encouraged and supported.

3.2.2 A retreat attended by all IBD staff was held in September 2002. As a result, sector responsibilities were reassigned, with each Mission given responsibility for all sectors in its region. In New Delhi, in addition to sector reassignment, three teams were formed under the three TCs. This gives responsibility to the TCs for day-to-

day management of staff and operations and allows the PM to focus on overall management.

3.3 Country Strategy

3.3.1 The elevated status of India to a priority country and the recent change to regional sectoral responsibility present an opportunity to rebalance and reconfigure Trade Program delivery. Consideration should be given to expanding trade delivery points through the reallocation of existing and new incremental resources to southern centres such as Chennai and Hyderabad and possibly augmenting resources in Mumbai and Bangalore.

3.3.2 Reallocated resources would impact New Delhi. This would require identifying areas that would receive less attention and how best to consolidate efforts in New Delhi in order to transfer resources to new centres, i.e. CBS and support resources to Chennai and LES contingents in Hyderabad and/or other centres. A significant workload in New Delhi centres around delivering services requiring the cooperation of the Indian government and arranging business and other visits. These time consuming and labour intensive activities represent a burden that does not exist elsewhere in India.

3.3.3 The Bangalore operation serves as an excellent model that could be replicated in other centres. Given the low cost and relative ease of setting up a small two person Trade Office (\$60,000, including office space and vehicle), expansion can be done on a contingency basis, continually assessing results and altering decisions in terms of resources required and locations chosen.

3.3.4 Plans are in place to fund a 'virtual' CO in Chennai who would operate independently out of his/her home. Optimal timing for further resource allocation would be as the junior CBS in New Delhi departs and a long serving CO retires next summer. Reporting relationships will need to be defined and documented, including clear oversight responsibilities. Administration support arrangements will also need consideration and definition.

Recommendation for PSD

3.3.5 PSD, in consultation with the Mission, should develop a detailed business case and action plan for trade resource deployment within India based on short-term immediate action and longer-term intentions.

PSD Action and Time Frame

- 3.3.5** In the short term, action has been taken to bolster our presence in the south of India. Over the medium to long-term, the Mission and PSA will develop an action plan for further trade deployment in India.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 3.3.6** The Mission, as a minimum, should proceed with adding IBD LES representation in Chennai.

Mission Action and Time Frame

- 3.3.6** An LES was hired as of May 1, 2004. A Canada-based employee will be added this summer (2004).

3.4 Reporting Relationship

3.4.1 The reporting relationship between Mumbai and New Delhi needs to be clarified. The PM in New Delhi is responsible for the Mumbai IBD operations with the STC in Mumbai reporting to him. In practice, the two programs operate independently but do maintain frequent and productive communications to ensure activities are coordinated, that each is adequately informed and kept up to date on latest developments. This has worked reasonably well with some initial adjustments required after the sectoral reassignment. In Mumbai, managerial functions such as planning, resource allocation, review of operational progress and assessment of performance are largely left to the STC. The STC's annual performance appraisal is done not by the PM but by the HOM. As was recommended in the 1998 Audit, an MOU has recently been developed between New Delhi and Mumbai. The MOU, however, only covers the administration relationship. To define and document the reporting relationship between the two offices within the Trade Program the MOU should include the role and responsibilities of each office and cover issues or areas that would facilitate operational interaction. This should be done regardless of future trade representation in India.

Recommendation for the Mission

- 3.4.2** The reporting relationship between Mumbai and New Delhi needs to be reviewed with consideration given to elevating it to the DHC and documented to include clear accountability measures.

Mission Action and Time Frame

3.4.2 As Mumbai has been upgraded to a full Consulate General, discussions are underway whether the Consul General should report to Headquarters or to the HOM in New Delhi.

3.5 Planning

3.5.1 Planning for the IBD Program in India has been strengthened through efforts by the PM to involve all staff in an annual retreat and mini-retreat planning sessions. Strategic direction and specific initiatives for the year are well understood. In particular, Client Service Fund (CSF) planning and conformance to required templates and the IMS interface are well managed. Sectoral strategies are developed by each officer for their priority sectors with the intention of identifying objectives, related strategies, activities and outputs. The underpinning for these sectoral plans is the South Asia Trade Action Plan (SATAP). The link between these sectoral plans and the SATAP is difficult to observe with the SATAP being high level and general and the sector plans specific and activity-based. The program could benefit from a consolidated program plan based on the sectoral strategies and linked to the SATAP.

3.5.2 The strategic element of the sectoral planning documents are inconsistent, with objects, activities and outputs used interchangeably. As well, once produced, these documents are not serving formally as a management tool to monitor progress, assess results and adjust strategies. The PM has developed criteria for next year's sectoral plans to improve consistency and the quality of the plans. It would be useful to have outside expertise (Trade Branch) to provide training on the recently developed IBD workplan template, so that all staff, including managers, have a common understanding of the planning process in terms of definitions and how the process can be of benefit. As well, more of a team approach in developing the sectoral and program plan would promote consistency, integration and the sharing of best practices. This approach would be productive when reviewing plans during the year.

Recommendations for the Mission

3.5.3 With support from TCS, the Mission should access training to develop and utilize a planning and management framework for the IBD Program.

3.5.4 The IBD Program should build on its current planning process to ensure that appropriate planning elements are applied and that there is consistency between offices, teams and individual workplans.

Mission Actions and Time Frames

- 3.5.3** The Mission now fully utilises the training opportunities available through TCS and several officers have already participated. New guidelines have been implemented to ensure that training is provided on a priority basis to employees or offices who demonstrate the greatest need. Under this new framework, consultations take place between all India offices to nominate the best candidate(s) for each training opportunity.
- 3.5.4** While we will continue to develop separate workplans for the two territories in India, with differering priority sectors, outside expertise (Trade Branch) will be sought to provide training on the development and use of planning tools prior to the 2004-05 IBD workplan cycle, with emphasis on achieving more consistency in the way plans are developed and implemented for each sector and in each region.

3.6 New Approach

3.6.1 There is a high level of understanding and application of the New Approach in the four offices visited. Knowledge was demonstrated by all staff regarding core services and additional services, the role and use of the Post Support Unit and IBOC, HORIZONS, and the importance and use of client surveys. The PM has established a New Approach³ Task Force within the Trade Section to engage staff at all levels in the principles of these processes. Regular meetings have been convened and, as a result, employees feel knowledgeable, valued and empowered.

InfoCentre

3.6.2 While the Trade Program does not have a formal InfoCentre, the basic elements are already in place. A registry has been set up and staffed and a WIN Champion established. By establishing an InfoCentre, enquiry processing can be streamlined, freeing-up additional time for officers to focus on more value-added work. As well, consistent use and application of WIN tracking would be facilitated and generic support functions such as research and information collection would be enhanced.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.6.3 The Trade Program should establish an InfoCentre.

Mission Action and Time Frame

3.6.3 The registry continues to evolve into an InfoCentre and is being renamed as such. We will look at ways of extending some of the

InfoCentre services to other offices in India, as a way of reducing workloads in the smaller offices and achieving greater efficiency and consistency in client service delivery.

Business Mission Agreements

3.6.4 There has been little use to date of Business Mission Agreements (BMA). This tool is strongly recommended by TCS to rationalize the purpose of visits and delegations both incoming and outgoing, and the resources devoted to this activity. It adds clarity and transparency when dealing with other organizations, reducing the risk of misunderstandings and ensuring that sources of funding are identified. The Mission is also about to implement a Virtual Visits Unit that will see individuals from different programs collectively tasked with responsibility for managing and organizing incoming visits. The BMA would be a useful template for this Unit to use for all types of visits.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.6.5 The Mission should comply with TCS practice of using a BMA for Trade Missions and consider it as a template for other program visits.

Mission Action and Time Frame

3.6.5 The Trade Program is now experimenting with the new BMA-light, which appears to be much more user-friendly and promises to be easier to comply with. Entrusting BMA implementation to the Mission's Visits Unit would be the next step to ensure systematic compliance as well as broader application (for other program visits).

3.7 Resources

3.7.1 Travel, hospitality and CSF are considered to be adequate. Workload in all the offices tend to centre around the local vicinity. Time, rather than money, is the constraint to travelling within the large geographic areas that each office is responsible. As already mentioned in Section 3.3, resource reallocation would likely result in greater value added. As well, implementation of an InfoCentre and the Virtual Visits Unit will free up resources for higher value work. This will, in turn, alter the competencies of existing positions. The LE-04 CAs are doing mostly clerical and low level support. As this type of activity is transferred to an InfoCentre, these positions will be doing more proactive type work. Job classifications will need to be evaluated and made consistent across all offices in India. At present, these CA positions range from LE-04 to LE-06. It is not entirely clear in reviewing assigned duties what differentiates these classifications. Staff raised this as an issue. A review of CA positions across all four offices should be

undertaken to ensure appropriate classification and consistency within the program. Use of TCS competency profiles would assist the Mission in this process.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.7.2 The Mission should review the differing levels of CA positions in the four offices based on the TCS competency profiles and submit positions for reclassification as required.

Mission Action and Time Frame

3.7.2 This will be done as soon as decisions are made concerning the redeployment of positions from New Delhi to other offices and the resulting workloads/organisational charts in each office.

3.7.3 Training is encouraged and strongly supported by management. However, training that occurs is usually on a reactive basis at the initiative of the employee. The program needs to develop a strategy that identifies training requirements at the program level and then match these needs to individual requirements. A good example cited for the Trade Section in New Delhi was the need for improved English language skills, particularly writing.

Recommendation for the Mission

3.7.4 The Trade Program should develop a formal training strategy.

Mission Action and Time Frame

3.7.4 Implemented.

CONSULAR PROGRAM

4.1 Management of the Program

4.1.1 The Consular Program Manager is also the manager of the human resources section. The consular territory includes India, Nepal and Bhutan. There is an Honorary Consul in Kolkata. The Honorary Consulate in Chennai has recently closed.

4.1.2 The program is effectively managed. The PM spends 30 percent of her time on the Consular Program. Meetings are not held regularly, but take place when needed to review cases and to relay information on Mission management. This is deemed to be sufficiently effective by the Consular Section staff. The PM has an open-door style of management and she is accessible as required. The LE-09 consular officer manages the operations, meeting daily with staff to discuss issues. The passport and citizenship workload is evenly divided between two LE-06 assistants, with the consular officer primarily responsible for case management. All three employees have received consular training in Canada. Training has also been provided to the receptionist, who backs up the assistants as required and also assists with updating the ROCA system. There is adequate bilingual capacity, although more language training would be beneficial. Contingency Plans and Travel Reports for each area of accreditation are up to date. There are 52 Wardens effectively covering the territories, and a two-day Warden conference is planned for this fiscal year.

4.1.3 Monthly COMIP reports are current and filed as required. The consular officer in Mumbai has frequently fallen behind inputting to the system, and has also reportedly been slow in responding to requests from the Mission for information. This issue has been addressed through training and continuous coaching by staff but results have been mediocre. This issue is being tracked by the PM.

4.1.4 The PM and the consular officer travelled to Chennai and to Kolkata to review operations of the Honorary Consulates, producing visit reports. The expense claims of the Honorary Consuls are reviewed in detail by the PM. Travel to the other offices is planned for later this fiscal year, and the Mission should ensure this is funded and executed.

Recommendations for the Mission

4.1.5 Ensure official language training for consular staff is included in the annual training plan.

4.1.6 Plan and fund PM visits to all the regional offices.

Mission Actions and Time Frames

4.1.5 All three consular staff are presently on French language training during office hours.

4.1.6 Implemented.

4.2 Service to Canadians

4.2.1 The consular office hours are essentially the hours of operation of the Mission. This has not presented problems keeping up with demand for services and the associated paper work. The various standards and fees are all clearly posted in the consular lobby. Clients are able to send e-mail inquiries to a general consular inbox, but this has not reduced the number of incoming phone calls. The new telephone system offering direct dialling will hopefully reduce the volume for the receptionist.

4.2.2 There are currently 12 Canadians detained in various locations in the territory. Visits take place initially and thereafter if requested, but the Mission makes annual contact at a minimum by either letter or telephone. Approximately 2,000 Canadians are registered in the ROCA system. Registration is encouraged by the Mission, yet the number of registrants is low given the estimated number of dual nationals living in the territories, which is based on the number of passport renewals the Mission processes. The on-line registration system is used by registrants, although incomplete information often renders the records useless. It would be helpful to have mandatory fields that would require registrants to provide complete information.

4.2.3 A cash register is not used to record and store revenue, but the cash boxes that are used are well controlled. Official Receipts (OR) are issued for consular fees only, or when requested by clients for passport services. Good internal control practices dictate that an OR should be issued for all revenue received. Additionally, when an OR is issued, the Mission detaches the fourth or gold copy of the EXT25 from the booklet and puts it on the file. To ensure all receipts collected are accounted for, booklets should be retained complete with the fourth copy of each receipt used.

Recommendation for the Mission

4.2.4 Issue OR for all revenue collected and retain the fourth or gold copy of the EXT25 in the booklet. Return used booklets to the Mission Finance Section for filing.

Mission Action and Time Frame

4.2.4 Implemented.

4.3 Passports and Citizenship

4.3.1 Passport volumes are steady, with nearly 1,400 passports issued in 2002. The 2003 statistics to date indicate a similar number will be issued this year. With the expansion in Chandigarh, the PM plans to set up passport issuance capability for this office as well as for Mumbai. The program is currently adequately resourced to handle passport and citizenship volumes, but a resource review should be undertaken if passport issuance is devolved to the two other missions. It may then be possible to eliminate one consular assistant position. Consular service standards are regularly being met (five-day turnaround for passport renewal), with incomplete applications received by mail being rejected and returned to the client with a form letter. In the past, incomplete applications were not returned and instead the Mission contacted the clients to get the missing information. This change of procedure has meant there is no backlog of pending, incomplete applications awaiting information for processing.

4.3.2 A review of passports and labels on hand was undertaken. When supplies are received from HQ, the PM opens the passport boxes to verify contents but an actual count is not done. The boxes are not re-sealed, but are appropriately secured. Not re-sealing the opened boxes of blank passports increases the risk of mixing the sequence.

Recommendation for the Mission

4.3.3 Consider implementing the practice of re-sealing opened boxes of passport blanks that are held in storage.

Mission Action and Time Frame

4.3.3 Implemented.

ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

5.1 Management of the Program

5.1.1 The Administration Program is headed by an experienced Management Consular Officer (MCO), an EX-01 serving in an EX-02 position. This is Canada's largest Administration Program abroad with a staff of 154 employees and a budget of over \$11 million to manage. In addition, overtime last year for the program equated to 17 FTEs. Administrative services extend to four satellite offices, one of which, in Chandigarh, is currently undergoing significant expansion. The Chandigarh Mission is to become a full Consulate General next February and the Administration Program is very engaged in ensuring a smooth and timely transition.

5.1.2 Administration is a well managed program. The MCO is a strong manager. His leadership skills are evident by the respect he has garnered from both his staff and his clients. He demands exacting standards of his staff, and the quality of service delivered by the program is considered very high. The MCO is supported by a strong team of CB managers and a highly educated and motivated LES work force. While this is a very large program with significant staff and infrastructure to manage, the MCO maintains an excellent pulse on the overall operations. He knows the issues and is constantly endeavouring to find ways to improve operations, work smarter and introduce efficiencies.

5.1.3 The MCO's Performance Management Agreement (PMA) sets out clear direction and objectives for the program. The HOM is actively interested in administration and meets with the MCO as required. Operations are carefully overseen by the MCO who has effectively delegated accountability and responsibility to each of his six CB administrative supervisors, i.e. Facilities, Human Resources, Security, Finance, Senior Technician and SIGNET Systems Administrator. Communications in the program are good, with weekly meetings of program management supplemented by periodic meetings in some of the sections. The program would benefit from having Accountability Agreements for each of the Sectional Supervisors. These agreements would set out priorities and objectives, in quantifiable and qualitative terms, that would be expected of each supervisor and establish a framework for which they would be held accountable. Expectations have only been given orally to these supervisors.

5.1.4 A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has recently been signed with the Mumbai Mission setting out administrative responsibilities of both parties. It is intended that MOUs will be drafted for Chandigarh and Bangalore as well. Administration regularly visits the four satellite offices. Service standards are in place for finance and can be found on the Mission's Intranet site. Service standards need to be developed for all program areas. This would help convey to the client the levels and timeliness of services to be delivered.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.1.5 Accountability Agreements should be established for each of the Sectional Supervisors.

5.1.6 Service standards should be developed for all disciplines within the Administration Program.

Mission Actions and Time Frames

5.1.5 Completed in January 2004.

5.1.6 In progress and will be completed by the end of June 2004.

5.2 Human Resources

5.2.1 Human Resources (HR) is headed by a non-rotational AS-03 who is serving in an AS-06 Personnel/Consular Officer position. This officer spends two-thirds of her time on HR and is assisted by three LES: a LE-07 HR Manager, a LE-06 Deputy and a LE-04 Assistant. HR at the Mission is a formidable challenge to manage. The Section's budget is \$2.1 million and it has responsibility for 300 LES positions, including 21 in the four satellite offices, of which 284 are currently staffed. Vacancies include positions in Trade (1), Property (1), Immigration (13) and a Driver position in Chandigarh. There are also five Expat positions occupied by CBS spouses (one such position in Immigration is vacant), seven emergency employees and two term positions, one each in Chandigarh and Mumbai.

5.2.2 HR is effectively responding to the challenge. Work in the Section is well defined. The Personnel Officer effects close supervision over the activities of the Section. Overall morale amongst the LES in the Mission is high. LES meet regularly with Mission management and they indicated they are pleased with the communications with management and with management's efforts to seek solutions to their concerns of which there are few. The Section does not have service standards. Standards would make clear to clients the role of each member of the Section, the service to be provided and the time-lines for service delivery. The standards for the HR Section need to be incorporated in the administration service standards. Refer to recommendation 5.1.6 above.

Reporting Relationships

5.2.3 The need for a hierarchy with a Personnel Officer, a HR Manager and Deputy Manager in such a small section is questionable. Currently, direction and supervision to the three staff serving in the Section is from the Personnel Officer, not from the HR Manager. "HR Manager" appears to be a title only and there is little

managerial responsibility associated with the job. There is little to differentiate between the workload of the three members of the Section. In fact, it would seem the Assistant position has the most complex job package, yet there is significant classification difference between the three positions. Moving to a flatter organization, similar to what took place in the Finance Section, with all three employees reporting to the Personnel Officer would be a more appropriate reporting configuration.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.2.4 Consideration should be given to reconfiguring the HR Section to have all three employees report directly to the Personnel Officer. Should the reorganization be implemented, position descriptions should be rewritten to reflect the new reporting lines.

Mission Action and Time Frame

5.2.4 Given one of the HR Assistant position at ASST-4 level has just been reclassified to ASST-6 (same level as second HR Assistant position), Mission would like to review the reporting issue at a later date.

HR Staff Meetings

5.2.5 There are no staff meetings in the HR Section. Staff believe communications could be improved in the Section. Direction is currently from the top-down and generally to the HR Manager. Sectional meetings would allow staff the opportunity to discuss workload pressures, to participate in prioritizing the workload and to garner possible solutions to further improve operations. Additionally, this would serve to keep staff better informed on Mission priorities and permit staff participation in the decision-making process.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.2.6 The HR Section should hold regular staff meetings.

Mission Action and Time Frame

5.2.6 Implemented. Meetings have been scheduled every two weeks.

5.2.7 There is a high volume of activity in the HR Section. In addition to day-to-day operations, there have been 30 competitions since April 2000 to hire 48 new employees. Also, since January 2001, 56 positions have been re-classified, including 31 security staff. Last fiscal year saw nine employees resign and another two dismissed for cause.

5.2.8 Much has been accomplished since the arrival of the Personnel Officer in the summer of 2001. Focus has been on better organizing the function and introducing a “work smart” attitude. The list of accomplishments is significant:

- annual appraisals are now done on time. Only four appraisals remain outstanding, a significant improvement from the over two hundred that were outstanding when the Personnel Officer arrived;
- new salary certificates were introduced to bring the Mission in line with marker organizations and in consonance with India’s taxation laws. This required sensitive consultations with the LES;
- leave status reports are now combined with the individual’s monthly pay stubs. This has deflected much work in the form of leave enquiries away from the Section;
- medical claims are no longer submitted to HR to process. Instead, LES now deal directly with National Insurance to seek reimbursement of their claim;
- the competition process was revamped to bring more transparency to the staffing process. The selection process was re-written, approved by HRL, and can be found on the Intranet site. Notices for competitions have been redesigned, PMs are encouraged to be more actively engaged in the staffing process, competition documents are on file and decisions are now justified in writing and put forward to the HOM for approval. Eligibility lists are established and those candidates not having success in the competition are encouraged to talk to the HR Manager to review the results;
- Reliability checks of new LES hired are conducted much more thoroughly than in the past. Letters from the individual’s bank, police clearances and reference checks are now on files which are well documented;
- hard copy files were established for each individual’s leave and attendance and for each position re-classified. Previously this information was filed collectively which made things difficult to find;
- most position descriptions were re-written following a request by HR to PMs to ensure coincidence with the actual duties being performed. Only the Immigration Program has yet to respond; and,
- a new policy was introduced relating to “leave without pay” (LWOP) for Canadians occupying Expat positions. The amount of LWOP in

the past was high and this was causing operational concerns. Requirements now call for individuals to use up their full annual leave credits and accumulated compensatory time before requesting LWOP. LWOP must also now be approved by the HOM and is limited to 75 hours per annum.

Handbook

5.2.9 The LES Handbook was last updated in 1999. A separate Handbook for Expats has never been approved by HRL. The Personnel Officer is working on combining the terms and conditions of employment for both LES and Expats into one Handbook. In the interim, amendments to these Handbooks are communicated to staff via e-mail.

Reliability Checks

5.2.10 A major undertaking in HR and the Security Sections is a review of the Reliability Checks of all LES employees in India. HQ has indicated that there is incomplete data on file for LES hired previous to 2001. Personnel files are now being reviewed, information relative to these Checks is being segregated and filed separately by individual and each LES will be requested to provide missing documentation. The MCO has re-assigned responsibility for Reliability Checks and ID photos to the Security Section from HR.

Training

5.2.11 Training of staff is taken seriously at this Mission. CFSD visited New Delhi and offered 14 courses on team building and effective communication training to 210 employees in November and December 2002. Also in 2002-03, three LES attended training sessions in Canada and four LES attended specialized training in India. This spring, CFSD conducted a survey of training requirements to identify the learning needs of staff. Fifty employees responded. A training plan is in the process of being developed. Staff are encouraged to consult the CFSI virtual training campus to identify courses of interest. The Mission is also planning on having a French tutor come to the Mission to deliver French classes.

Leave and Attendance

5.2.12 Leave is well controlled. At the beginning of the fiscal year, employees are requested to submit leave plans for the whole of the fiscal year. This, however, is somewhat problematic in that there is little deviation allowed in scheduling holidays once staff have committed to specific dates. Staff have indicated that, because of the rigidity of this system, the only option left to them is to take sick leave in lieu of annual leave. A review of leave records indicated some instances where large amounts of sick

leave have been taken. It is suggested that the Mission may wish to revisit its policy to allow greater flexibility in its management of LES leave and attendance.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.2.13 The Mission should re-examine its policy of having LES make firm commitments for annual leave at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Mission Action and Time Frame

5.2.13 The LES Handbook reads as follows:

“To simplify the scheduling of annual vacation leave, employees are to advise their supervisors of their vacation preference(s) in writing by April 30. Supervisors will give an employee as much notice as is practical and reasonable for approval or disapproval of a vacation leave request.”

No LES employee is requested to make firm commitments for annual leave at the beginning of each fiscal year. It would appear to be a question of perception on the part of the LES which will be clarified with the LES Committee at a next meeting.

Competition Process

5.2.14 The competition process, while more transparent than previously, is still receiving some criticism. This was evidenced by letters received following some LES competitions held last fiscal year. A major concern of LES is that most competitions are open to external candidates, thereby making it more difficult for those already employed in the Mission to compete. Of the 48 positions staffed since April 2000, 26 were filled by outside candidates and many of these were the higher level positions, viz: one LE-09, two LE-08 and one LE-07 position. Only one LE-08 position was filled by a candidate from inside the Mission; most positions filled by insiders were below the LE-06 level. It is also suggested the bar for qualifying for a position is unfairly high. For example, currently, most LE-04 and 05 positions require three years of experience in a similar position, LE-06 positions five years and LE-07 positions eight to ten years experience. LES are of the opinion that good candidates are precluded from applying because of these rigid restrictions. Moreover, LES indicated that the Immigration Program has no LES sitting on any of their competition boards. This is also generally the case for LE-08 boards and above. The Mission may wish to revisit its current staffing policies to further improve the competition process and to create a perception of always being open and fair.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 5.2.15** **The Mission should review its staffing policies to create more opportunities for those already employed in the Mission to advance their careers.**

- 5.2.16** **LES should be added to competition boards, where feasible, to ensure more transparency in the staffing process.**

Mission Actions and Time Frames

- 5.2.15** **This will be discussed with respected Program Managers.**

- 5.2.16** **Implemented. The President of LES Committee sat on the last competition and we are planning to have other LES Committee members sit on future competition boards.**

Personnel Management System

5.2.17 The HR Assistant is responsible for preparing the payroll and inputting data into the Personnel Management System (PMS). She estimates there are approximately 3,000 entries each month to the System ranging from overtime, classifications and additions/deletions of staff. No one in the HR Section is verifying the accuracy of these input documents. Also, no one has been trained to back up the Assistant when she is absent. She is also the only employee with access to the separate Expat payroll system. A contractor has recently documented the System and prepared a User Manual. It is important that management ensure that inputted data is verified for accuracy, and that someone be trained to back up the HR Assistant. The MCO believes the HR Section is currently under-resourced and is planning on redeploying a part-time resource to the Section from elsewhere in the Program. The MCO should consider having the Finance Section verify the payroll and overtime charges each month.

Recommendations for the Mission

- 5.2.18** **The Mission should ensure that all data inputted into the Personnel Management System is verified to ensure its accuracy.**

- 5.2.19** **To back-up the HR Assistant, an individual should be trained on the Personnel Management System.**

Mission Actions and Time Frames

- 5.2.18** **This is now being done.**

5.2.19 Implemented.

Classification of Immigration Program Assistants

5.2.20 The nine Program Assistants employed in the Immigration's Temporary Resident Unit (TRU) strongly believe their positions are under-classified and have approached management about this situation. They are currently classified as LE-04s whereas their counterparts carrying out similar duties in other missions are classified one level higher. Moreover, until recently they maintain they were conducting detailed interviews of every walk-in applicant for visitor visas and employment and student authorizations and making full recommendations on the status of the applicant. This, they believe, would warrant an even higher classification. They argue that there is a lack of coincidence with duties performed and the position descriptions. These position descriptions were written several years ago. Management has informally put a case forward to CIC but it is believed that there is no funding available to accommodate the change. These individuals also point to the inequity in that many positions in other Programs have been re-classified where warranted.

5.3 Physical Resources

5.3.1 The management of Physical Resources is the responsibility of the Deputy MCO, an EG-06 acting in an AS-06 position, reporting to the MCO. Physical resources are very well managed. The DMCO has considerable experience and his background allows him to effectively oversee and manage the complex functioning of the Mission systems. The Physical Resources Section has over 100 employees and an operating budget of over \$4 million. Given the importance and complexity of the various systems that have been installed, this position should be staffed continuously by a technical specialist as opposed to a generalist MCO employee.

5.3.2 The DMCO is assisted by a Property Manager (LE-09) and numerous other staff. Meetings take place with the MCO as required, and the DMCO meets his senior staff every day to discuss projects and issues. The Mission Property Management Plan is current and has been filed with HQ. The Materiel Management Officer (LE-07) has not yet benefited from the in-Canada property and materiel training course but is enrolled for this fiscal year. Other key staff have both training and experience, demonstrated by their knowledge and confidence regarding their roles and responsibilities. There is a high number of maintenance staff at the Mission required to deliver services and to maintain the plant. Analysis by the PM has proven it to be more cost effective to have maintenance staff on strength than to contract for services. There is better quality control over work and equipment is replaced less often. Changes in reporting relationships should create some efficiencies; for instance, having the Transport Coordinator (LE-05) reporting to the Property Manager instead of the DMCO. A merger of the Stores and Materiel sections is currently being considered by the

DMCO. Currently, the Materiel Management Officer is often too busy to properly supervise and manage this area, especially during relocation season.

5.3.3 An extremely effective work order registration and tracking system has been designed in-house using MS Access. While it took a commitment of resources to set up the system, it functions very well, providing various detailed reports that show numbers of work orders by property, total costs and labour time. Over 3,800 requests were received last fiscal year. This system should be considered a departmental standard and best practice and should be shared with other missions.

5.3.4 The Mission disposes of surplus assets through auction sales to the public twice annually. The most recent sale generated \$150,000. This included the planned disposal of three vehicles at the end of their life expectancy. All documentation is complete and on file. The Mission has a detailed multi-year replacement schedule for vehicles and for major capital assets such as air conditioners, generators and large appliances. The Mission has been very successful with furniture refinishing and recovering, allowing many pieces to be kept in very good condition beyond their normal life expectancy.

Compound

5.3.5 The Mission compound is an eleven acre site that houses the offices, 30 staff quarters and various maintenance shops and other facilities. The overall design is very functional and efficient, and presents an appealing environment for work and for those residing within the compound. Work areas are all neat and well organized. Numerous initiatives have been taken to conserve energy and generate cost savings. The installation of an irrigation/sprinkler system, currently underway, will reduce the number of contract maintenance workers required. The mission has succeeded in separating the electricity bill for the compound to reflect residential and commercial usage. This should result in significant savings from the residential use. As well, a major project is underway to upgrade the compound generators and install an exhaust heat recycling system which will further reduce annual utilities costs by 10%, representing savings of more than \$100,000 per year.

Official Residence

5.3.6 The Official Residence (OR) is Crown-owned and is in very good condition due to a pro-active maintenance program that has maintained the house, outbuildings and grounds to a superior level over the years. More sanitary facilities for guests should be constructed in the garden area at the rear of the Residence, which is used extensively for representational activities. Currently, the one public washroom is inside near the front door. The fountain at the front entrance is a centrepiece to the property that very much enhances this Residence. The fountain is in need of repairs which are planned for fiscal year 2003/04.

Staff Quarters

5.3.7 There are 30 Crown-owned staff quarters (SQs) on the compound and 15 Crown-leased off-compound. A cross-section of SQs was visited by the Audit Team, and all were deemed to be reasonable both in terms of size and location. A major project to renovate D block (four SQs) will get underway this fiscal year. The Mission will need four temporary flats during construction. One transit flat was created when the Mission's complement of employee-couples increased last year. It made good economic sense to leave this SQ unoccupied for a year given the high cost of fit-up (approximately \$60,000 per unit) that would have been associated with replacing it. It has been used occasionally by employees on extended temporary duty. The New Delhi property market is tight, and the Mission will need to begin searching for three other suitable SQs well in advance of the posting season.

5.3.8 There is an excellent multi-year plan for property maintenance and equipment replacement. Annual inspections of all properties take place. All SQ inventories and Occupancy Agreements are current and on file. There is one ADA due to a construction project in close proximity to the SQ in question. All documentation related to the application and the approval is complete and on file.

Official Vehicles

5.3.9 The Mission has a fleet of thirty-six official vehicles, of which twelve are sedan-style cars used for official transportation. The others are a mix of service vehicles, utility vans, delivery trucks and courier scooters. Vehicle mileage logs are maintained for each vehicle and sent daily to the Transport Coordinator for tracking and analysis. This permits gasoline consumption abnormalities to be detected right away, and to assess if Drivers are being utilized efficiently. Analysis showed that both these areas are well managed. Personal usage of official vehicles is rare, and having a Mission Driver is mandatory.

Stores Management

5.3.10 Due to unavailability of quality items on the local market, the Mission maintains a large store area for office supplies as well as mechanical, plumbing, electrical and vehicle parts. Many spares must be kept on hand to service the Canadian systems and equipment that are installed in the compound. Currently, three employees are required to manage the system. This will be reduced with the purchase and stocking of three mini-vans, one each for electrical, plumbing and mechanical servicing. The inventory database is inadequate because it cannot produce reliable reports on stock levels. This hinders the Stores personnel from planning ahead for stock replenishment. A new system is to be purchased this fiscal year that will bring much needed improvement to inventory control. Once it is up and running, a complete stock-taking will be done. Supplies ordering is done through HQ and Singapore. The Mission also has a separate Materiel section, and Mission management is considering

merging this with the Stores section. Better overall management may be achieved if these two areas are merged under one manager.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.3.11 Obtain estimates for the construction of a guest washroom facility in the garden area and add this project to the multi-year plan.

5.3.12 Consider merging the Materiel and Stores sections.

Mission Actions and Time Frames

5.3.11 This has been implemented and funded by SRSF and work completed. The new washroom has been used for two or three large functions and is considered an asset.

5.3.12 We are currently working on this. There are issues that are still to be resolved before this recommendation can be implemented.

5.4 Finance

5.4.1 The Finance Section head, the Deputy Financial Officer, is an FI-01 acting in an FI-02 level position. He is supported by five employees, four of whom have significant experience working in the Finance Section. The recent addition of an FI to the Section brings added professionalism to the Finance function and a greater emphasis on strategic comptrollership. The MCO, as the Senior Financial Officer, complements the Section by carefully reviewing monthly financial reports, signing payment documents and closely examining accounts at month-end. The FI's focus has been on overseeing financial operations, streamlining accounting procedures and making greater use of technology. The Section meets monthly to review workload issues and discuss priorities.

5.4.2 Accounting operations are significant. Responsibilities include controlling a budget totalling \$11.2 million covering seven offices and accounting for annual revenues of over \$11 million. Revenues are primarily from Immigration fees. The Mission has three bank accounts: a convertible Rupee account; a non-convertible Rupee account; and a third account, a Rupee savings (wash) account. This wash account is topped up by the money in the non-convertible account each evening to earn interest and is depleted at the start of the following day, with the money moving back into the non-convertible account. This wash account is not recorded in IMS. In 2002-03, interest earned amounted to \$8,638 and was coded to GL 31720, "Interest earned on Mission Bank Account". The Mission is the only one in India with any official bank accounts. Volume of bank transactions each month in these accounts average about 450 per month. In March 2003, the volume peaked at 545 transactions.

5.4.3 The Section has implemented most of the recommendations of the 1998 SIV audit report which placed a heavy emphasis on improving efficiency. Payments seem to be well controlled and revenues appropriately managed. Further efficiencies are needed, and this is where the FI's attention has been focussed since arriving at the Mission last September. The MCO has mandated him to streamline operations and to reduce, where possible, the volume of paperwork and signatures involved in processing payments. SIV has requested that three months of accounts be forwarded to Headquarters to allow for a detailed review of financial transactions. This review will be the subject of a separate report.

5.4.4 The Finance Section has been re-organized in part to avoid having employees in acting pay situations each time another employee was absent. Currently, the LE-08 Accountant reports to the FI, with each of the other employees reporting to the Accountant. In the past, relationships were more vertical in configuration. Cross-training was introduced to educate staff on what others in the Section were doing. Staff can now more effectively back-up one another when absent. Staff were all re-classified up by one level except for an LE-05, Assistant. This Assistant points to certain responsibilities being overlooked when her position was re-written. She is the back-up for the Accountant. Since this has negatively affected her morale, it is suggested that the classification of this position be re-visited to ensure all factors have been properly considered.

5.4.5 Other notable accomplishments in Finance have included developing financial reports using macros from information in IMS to a format easily understood by the user; eliminating one petty cash fund to bring the number to 10 (others are being examined); devolving operating budgets to Program management and, within Administration, to each of its Sections; re-assigning cheque distribution to the MCO's Assistant; training support staff in all Programs to use IMS and providing them with IMS "read-only" access; reviewing delegated signing authorities at all the India missions; and changing client service hours to allow Finance time in the morning to better concentrate on inputting data into IMS and carrying out the payment runs.

5.4.6 Finance has also broached HQ Finance to seek permission to use an automatic bank reconciliation process. The intent is to do the reconciliation on a stand alone computer now used in the Section to review banking activity. This would involve retrieving SAP bank reconciliation information sent electronically from the Mission's bank and transferring it to the networked IMS (SAP) accounting system. The FI believes reconciliation time would be reduced from three days to a half day each month. HQ is concerned about the cost of implementing this system. The Mission should consider preparing a business case to support this reconciliation process.

5.4.7 There is room to introduce further change. This includes:

- Reducing the large number of "urgent" requests Finance receives. These exist because Programs sit on invoices until the last minute

before forwarding them for payment. There is little way to tell how long Programs have held these invoices since the mail room is not date stamping them when received at the Mission. Advances for travel are sometimes also requested with little notice. Service standards call for Finance to pay within five days of receiving an invoice. Last minute requests put added pressure on Accounting staff which is not necessary.

- Reducing the number of vendor accounts. The 1998 audit reported there were 346 active vendors. Today the number in New Delhi has grown to 634 active vendors. In addition, Mumbai has 216, Kolkata 25, Kathmandu 3, Chennai 48, Bangalore 65 and Chandigarh 82. The more suppliers, the greater impact on Finance since more individual payments have to be made. Most vendors are associated with the Property Section. There are 11 individuals who initiate these purchases in the Property Section. By consolidating purchases with fewer suppliers, better prices may be negotiated and monthly, rather than individual invoicing, may be possible. An examination of vendor activity over a three month period pointed out several vendors being used but individually each had few related transactions.
- Cutting down on the high volume of signatures in the payment process. Signing documents is time-consuming and the volume is a concern of management. Each invoice submitted for payment requires the Program Manager's authorizing signature (FAA Section 34). Often several invoices are submitted at the same time. By batching these invoices, using form EXT 1558-1, only one signature of the Program Manager would be required.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.4.8 The Rupee savings (wash) account should be recorded in IMS.

5.4.9 A business case to justify the need to introduce automatic bank reconciliation should be prepared and submitted to SMFF for approval.

5.4.10 Service standards for Finance should be amended to place a requirement on client Programs to submit invoices to Finance for payment within a specified time frame, i.e. five working days. Invoices should also be date stamped when received in the mail room.

- 5.4.11** **The Mission should review its vendor list with a view to reducing it, consolidating purchasing where possible and encourage suppliers to invoice monthly rather than for each individual transaction.**
- 5.4.12** **Batching invoices from the Program areas should become standard practice.**

Mission Actions and Time Frames

- 5.4.8** **Our official account status is a non interest bearing current account; therefore the wash account is no longer used. The Reserve Bank of India has submitted a notification to the Bank of America requesting that our bank accounts should not bear interest. As a result, to abide and to align our operations within the Indian regulations, we have requested that our official bank accounts be non interest bearing.**
- 5.4.9** **SMFF has approved our business case, and we are proceeding jointly to implement the electronic funds transfer (EFT) process with automatic bank reconciliation package.**
- 5.4.10** **Service standards are available on the New Delhi Intranet site for all programs to refer to, and payment within specified time frame is also included. Invoices are stamped once received in Finance. Date stamping at the mail room is not practical due to the high volume of mail.**
- 5.4.11** **We have reviewed our vendor list and have updated the list. We are also in discussion with the Property & Material Management section to consolidate vendors and to reduce the number of vendors.**
- 5.4.12** **We started batching invoices in September 2003.**

Revenues

5.4.13 **Revenue from Immigration is declining. In fiscal year 2002-03, the Mission collected \$11,321,585, a drop from the previous year's \$23,576,426. This change is the result of the new Immigration regulations that permit applicants to pay the Right of Landing fee (ROLF) later. This has reduced the number of ROLF refunds. Refunds declined from 201 in the initial six months of last fiscal year to 124 in the last half-year. Its impact on workload has been somewhat offset by the Immigration Section's decision to reduce the threshold for refunding overpayments from INR500 to INR150 to comply with CIC policy. As a consequence, 25 additional cheques were**

raised in the last six months of 2002-03. The Finance Section estimates each cheque costs INR179 to produce.

5.4.14 Controls over revenues are adequate. Most applicants pay Immigration fees directly to the Bank of America which has a branch on-site on the compound. Others pay by mail and the Immigration Cost Recovery Clerk submits these drafts directly to the Bank. Immigration forwards documentation to Finance to input into IMS. There is no Immigration cash handled in the Finance Section. The Auditor General reviewed Immigration's cost recovery procedures in November 2002 and came away satisfied with the controls in place according to the Immigration Program Manager. It is important that the GL accounts used to record Immigration revenues are carefully monitored to ensure their correct use. Recovery of expenditures including cable, phone charges, utilities and rental of vehicles/drivers is also well controlled and effectively managed.

Bank Balances

5.4.15 Bank balances in both the convertible and non-convertible accounts are high, at times, but generally there is a good reason for this. The Mission could rationalize holding larger than normal balances at certain periods last year because of the evacuation of CBS from India, large CIDA payments that had to be made and the prepaid rent on the Chancery in Mumbai. Outstanding cheques, on average, run at about 8 million Rupees. The bank balances average nearly \$1 million at month end. This suggests there may be opportunities to repatriate some funds to Canada and/or to reduce the acquisition of funds from Canada. Last fiscal year saw the Mission purchase funds on eight different occasions for a total of \$4,388,000.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.4.16 The Mission should carefully monitor bank balances to ensure cash is effectively managed.

Mission Action and Time Frame

5.4.16 Our senior accountant monitors the bank balances daily and produces a weekly cash flow statement for the deputy financial officer. The deputy financial officer will review the cash flow statement to ensure that the bank balances are effectively managed and to recommend decisions for funds repatriation or funds purchase based upon the cash requirement of the mission.

Contract Review Board

5.4.17 The Contract Review Board (CRB) is functioning well. It meets weekly, with an established standard for the review of contracts of less than two days. Evaluation notes and records of decision are kept on file. The current threshold for reviewing services contracts is \$1,500. The DMCO and MCO both support a higher level, perhaps up to \$2,500, which would reduce the high number of smaller contracts being sent for review and thus reduce the burden on the CRB members.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.4.18 Consider raising the threshold of \$1,500 for service contracts with a view to reducing the number of smaller contracts going to the CRB.

Mission Action and Time Frame

5.4.18 We have raised the threshold to CAD 3,000 for service contracts as per the audit recommendation.

CANZA Commissary and Club Canada

5.4.19 The Mission supports and contributes to the management of the CANZA Commissary and Club Canada. The CANZA Commissary is a non-profit, on-site store jointly operated by Canada, New Zealand and Australia, which brings in grocery and other household items that are difficult to obtain or are of dubious quality in India. CANZA is governed by an MOU with oversight provided by an Executive Committee whose members are appointed by the same three countries. A part-time manager is responsible for operations including supervising full-time staff. The organization and its staff are independent of the Mission with separate hiring, accounting systems etc. Each of the three missions has contributed assets to get the operation started. Surpluses are used to replace capital items. An annual audit is performed by an independent accounting firm.

5.4.20 The Club Canada operates in a similar fashion with independent management, hiring and accounting. It offers meals and catering to staff and families and provides facilities for the Mission to hold receptions. The Club is governed by a constitution with by-laws and oversight provided by an Executive Committee elected by members. The MCO is a member of the Executive Committee representing the High Commissioner, with veto rights on any issue impacting the Mission. Record keeping has been a challenge. Efforts are underway to update the constitution and to keep other pertinent information current such as membership lists, records of meetings and by-law changes.

5.4.21 Of particular concern is the lack of current financial information. There has been insufficient resources devoted to record keeping and accounting due to a lack of time and varying degree of skills of the managers involved. As a result the financial position for the Club cannot be accurately assessed, increasing the risk that potential liabilities are not being acknowledged. To address this situation a half-time resource with appropriate skills is required to carry out proper accounting. An annual independent audit would provide assurance that proper controls are in place and that the financial statements are accurate. From a management perspective an annual plan with a forecasted budget would assist the Club in its operations and the Executive Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities.

Recommendation for the Mission

5.4.22 The Mission should ensure that the Club Canada maintains proper accounts and that any liabilities are identified and accounted for.

Mission Action and Time Frame

5.4.22 An accountant and bookkeeper were hired last year and all accounts have since been reconciled and liabilities accounted for.

5.5 Information Management and Technology

5.5.1 The function is well managed, and clients feel well served. The Mission has one CS-02 assisted by three LES SAs, with two ELs covering the secure area and all telephone maintenance. A major bandwidth upgrade is planned for this fiscal year, which will quadruple the capacity and should improve the efficiency of the network. Staff are fully engaged keeping up with routine work and client calls. A central voice-mail and e-mail inbox has been established for clients to leave messages. All SA staff can access either of these message systems. The CS registers all calls to track volumes and identify areas for concern or greater attention both in terms of equipment and training for staff. IT training is planned based on problems experienced by staff, and schedules are published on the Intranet. The need for an additional resource exists, given the workload, for which a business case will be needed. The expanding office in Chandigarh has added to the workload. A number of new but poor quality computers have broken down at the Mission and the office in Mumbai, keeping all staff extra busy.

5.5.2 The Mission has an Expat-06 position to manage the Registry. This position also supervises two Receptionists and four Mail Room LES. Filing is up to date and the work areas are neat. The Expat employee, a CBS spouse, has only a level II security clearance, but an application has been made to obtain level III. This level would normally be required to work in this area of the Chancery. In the meantime, highly classified material is being stored elsewhere.

5.5.3 Back-ups are done according to schedule, and the data tapes are stored appropriately. The Mission has two satellite telephone units which are appropriately stored. One of the units is set up on a permanent basis in the secure area, and a number of staff have been shown how to operate it although more staff could receive training. Regular testing is taking place. A second unit is on inventory but its location and condition need to be confirmed.

5.5.4 The telephone systems are maintained by the two technicians. A new direct dial system will be installed shortly to reduce the calls to the Receptionist. Additionally, the Mission will activate the OCTEL scripts which provide automated information to callers. This will be helpful for Immigration inquiries, which make up nearly 70 percent of incoming calls. The Mission has 55 cellular telephone units and budgets have been devolved to Program Managers to control their usage and costs. Users pay for personal calls based on circulated monthly bills.

5.5.5 The Mission intranet is an excellent tool that contains useful information on all Programs. Each Program is responsible for reviewing and updating that Section's information. To this end, appropriate training has been provided to these employees, and the IT Section provides guidance as required.

Recommendations for the Mission

5.5.6 Develop a business case for an additional position in the SIGNET Section for submission to HQ.

5.5.7 Provide training to more staff in the use of the PSAT unit, and locate and test the second unit.

Mission Actions and Time Frames

5.5.6 A business case will be completed by September 2004.

5.5.7 Training will be scheduled once Operating Instructions are posted on the Mission Intranet Site. All PSAT units in ITAMS assigned to New Delhi are accounted for. An operational testing of the second unit will be conducted in conjunction with the training.

APPENDIX A

RESOURCES FACT SHEET - *all offices

Personnel (FTEs)

	CBS	LES	Total
HOM Office	2	7	9
General Relations	5	5	10
International Business Development	6	19	25
Administration/Consular	7	157	164
Development	5	7	12
Immigration	22	104	126
Defence Relations	2	0	2
Solicitor General	1	1	2
RCMP	1	1	2
Totals	51	301	352

Physical Resources

ASSETS	OWNED	LEASED
Chancery/Compound	1	0
OR	1	0
SQs	30	15
Vehicles	22	0

Financial Information 2002-2003

Operating	\$6,419,100
LES Salaries	3206900
CB Overtime	32300
Capital	363000
Total	\$10,021,300