

**EVALUATION OF LOCALLY-ENGAGED STAFF (LES)  
TRAINING: SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS**

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February 10, 2003**

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AMA.....	Area Management Office
CBS.....	Canada-based Staff
CFSI.....	Canadian Foreign Service Institute
CFSM.....	Management Services
DFAIT.....	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
HOM.....	Head of Mission
HQ.....	Headquarters
IMS.....	Information Management System
IT.....	Information Technology
JPPT.....	Consular Affairs Bureau Training Section
LES.....	Locally Engaged Staff
OGD.....	Other Government Department
OLT.....	Official Languages Training
SME.....	Subject Matter Expert

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of this study is to evaluate the Locally Engaged Staff (LES) In-Canada Training Program and the Official Language Distance Learning in the context of the LES Training Strategy.

In response to the LES Training Strategy, **the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI) developed seven In-Canada training programs:** Accountants and Assistant Accountants, Assistants to Heads of Program, Commercial Officers and Assistants, Mission Administration Officers, Property and Materiel Managers, Public Affairs Officers and Political and Economic Officers. As of March 31, 2002, 512 LES or **about 19 % of the eligible LES population had taken part in these courses.**

Initial reaction to the In-Canada courses by participants yielded an average approval rating of 85%, with qualitative data supporting this favourable rating.

Participants indicated they had acquired new knowledge and skills, had learned about how to access the tools available to assist them in their work and had developed increased familiarity with Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and

*“Unfortunately there is not enough time for all questions, but suppose that this just means that we have a lot to share and that this training was long overdue.”*

International Trade (DFAIT). They valued the “in Canada experience” and meeting colleagues from Headquarters (HQ) and missions. A common theme across courses and deliveries was the desire for increased time to cover and absorb all the information and to have additional practice on what was learned. Self-assessments by course participants before and at the end of courses indicate that there have been significant levels of achievement in terms of increased learning.

**Results of course evaluations with respect to learning objectives 6 to 24 months after the training had taken place, demonstrate there has been a high degree of application of the knowledge and skills in the workplace.** All participants, with a few exceptions, believe the course was relevant and of benefit to them.

Overall, the In-Canada training program had a positive impact on LES’ understanding of Canada and its culture, DFAIT, of their role, where their work fits in the organization, in their ability to identify the right contacts at HQ and in fostering a good working relationship with

*I have been in this job exactly 9 years without any training or guidance from my previous supervisors. I am now aware of my commitments as a LES Public Affairs Officer and am confident to carry them out.*

these contacts. Also, LES benefited immensely from meeting counterparts from other missions, and exchanging best practices. Supervisors indicated that employees improved their knowledge and skills in areas relevant to them and increased their effectiveness in performing their duties. They now have a greater appreciation for “the big picture”. There are also some detectable, if not marked, increases in LES trainee morale, confidence, loyalty, and a sense of belonging to DFAIT.

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There is the almost complete unanimity that in-Canada delivery of these courses is absolutely essential for two main reasons. The first is that of getting to know Canada, DFAIT, the Canadian culture, and DFAIT's HQ staff that are of key importance to them. The second is meeting with, and forming networks with colleagues from other missions both globally and regionally. The formation of post-course networks is highly valued, and its benefits should not be underestimated.

**Trainee:** *“The training in Canada gave me an opportunity to meet colleagues from others posts. We had a wonderful and professional team and we still stay in touch, share our leading practices, provide advice and solve problems together. This is a great team building component.”*

**Supervisor:** *“The value (of having training in Canada) is simply immense and vital.”*

The Official Languages distance learning program is well run, has good content and tools, and is much appreciated by trainees.

*“The two courses I have had so far (FRA200 and FRA210) have been outstanding and I am very pleased with them. I very much appreciate the opportunity to enroll in distance learning courses offered by CFSI.”*

There has been application of skills, and supervisors have reported positive impacts in terms of increased employee confidence and client satisfaction. However some LES have mentioned the lack of opportunity to practice their new language skills, French in particular. This program has been a success in relation to the objectives established for it.

In the absence of performance indicators to measure the impact at the organizational level, there are numerous qualitative comments that point to the impact the training has had on the individuals and the mission. **Training in Canada provided a very positive impact on the employees job performance.** Impacts specific to the individuals are their increased effectiveness and efficiency in performing their duties, their gained skills and confidence in the subject matter, their greater problem solving abilities through post-course networks, their self-motivation and ability to motivate others, their improved communication skills, their sense of belonging, their pro-activity and independence in the workplace, their increased sense of initiative and resourcefulness, the degree to which they perform higher functions, their improved team building skills through the use of networks, their bringing new ideas to the workplace, and their more positive attitude and approach to work. Some employees have increased their productivity by doing more work or taking on additional duties.

**At the organization level, again, the effect has been overwhelmingly positive.**

Trainees often passed on their knowledge and skills to other employees which resulted in greater efficiency at the mission. Trainees solved system and procedural problems and improved work processes. Communication amongst LES and Canada-based Staff (CBS) as well as contacts with business clients has improved through a better understanding of Canada and its culture. Employees save time as they know how to acquire the information needed. Employees have more credibility with local contacts since they have visited Canada. Knowledge shared with

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others also resulted in increased efficiency of the overall program at the mission. There is therefore the potential for a very positive snow-ball effect which adds yet more to the return on investment in training.

At a more macro level, comments indicate that the training may assist in increasing our exports and Canada's profile abroad. Through exchanges with other course participants, LES Commercial Officers can better match local opportunities with Canadian capabilities and also expand Canadian businesses' presence in markets with similar characteristics in the same region. LES also indicate that they now understand the Canadian business mind and are better equipped to help them in the local market. In turn, their intimate knowledge of Canada impacts on business clients' perception and helps "establish the personal relationships which we always advise our clients to establish with local partners". Public Affairs officers also feel better equipped to promote Canada's image and priorities.

Heads of Mission (HOM) from six case study missions were highly satisfied with the LES In-Canada training programs and their **overall satisfaction level rated 8 out of 10**. They believe that these programs helped reduce skills gaps observed in the 2000 Discussion Paper. LES came back with a higher motivation with regard to their work. They are more proactive in their work and less isolated. The shortcomings that have existed over the past five years are now being addressed. There are still improvements to

**Supervisors:** *"We must send our staff to Canada from time to time. In most cases, LES work in a bubble. They have no idea why we do certain things in the workplace and the implication behind the processes."* and *"It definitely helps the LES have a direct, first hand contact with our reality, our environment in HQ and as such is essential and should continue on an ongoing basis."*

make, but it is a major shift compared to what DFAIT was doing in the past. According to their perception and to LES feedback, training programs were very useful, practical and designed to facilitate Locally Engaged Staff's jobs. Training content was in most cases very accurate and appropriate to LES' needs. In their opinion, the In-Canada training program is a good way to provide Locally Engaged Staff with a concrete Canadian experience. Several HOMs mentioned that in some cases, the LES slip back into their old ways after a while back at the mission. The benefits of the training are not always long-lasting in terms of increased efficiencies and may point to the need for additional training after a certain period to reinforce learning.

The six Heads of Mission surveyed encourage DFAIT to continue with the LES In-Canada Training programs and recommend increasing the number of individuals who can participate. It is seen as being beneficial for new recruits since they can as a result start to perform their work at a higher level sooner and more rapidly, and for experienced Locally Engaged Staff to up-date or refresh their skills. HOMs also rated the Official Languages distance learning as very useful and quite effective in increasing LES's level of comprehension and confidence in the targeted language, in turn increasing client satisfaction.

The twelve Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) surveyed felt that the LES In-Canada training program had a **very positive impact** on participants and was definitely worthwhile. While some

found it difficult to speak directly to improved efficiencies in work, they all felt that the program provided numerous benefits and should be deemed essential. It was suggested that the training be quantified and measurable. This assessment was based not only on the specific subject matter of the various programs, but also on the cultural awareness and network-building inherent in the training. All agreed that the global benefits of the training programs made the In-Canada training initiative worthwhile.

**Overall, the In-Canada LES Training and Official Languages Distance Learning programs have been a major success.** There is ample evidence to support the continued delivery and expansion of these programs.

The results of the DFAIT Annual Learning Surveys indicate that over the 2000-2002 period CFSI has been successful in improving awareness of learning opportunities, usage of, and access to, such opportunities, and general satisfaction with DFAIT's commitment to training and development. There remains work to be done especially for LES staff who lag behind other DFAIT staff in most dimensions. For example, only 36% of LES stated that they can access the training they need compared to 55% for Canada-based rotational and non-rotational employees.

**Our findings conclude that the rationale for the LES Training Strategy is still very valid,** indeed it is critically important for DFAIT. LES represent approximately 55% of DFAIT's population, and an estimated 3,338, including approximately 1,400 Other Government Departments (OGD) employees, of them are eligible for training. They are the corporate memory of Canada's missions and have increasingly taken over Canada-based functions.

A number of specific recommendations and suggestions with respect to LES training have resulted from this evaluation and synthesis. In our view it is significant that some HOMs suggested that CFSI could do very little to make the existing training better.

In 1999/2000, when the LES training program began, CFSI was moving into a major LES human resources management vacuum, and in so doing has had some major successes and raised expectations in the LES community. Indeed, almost all trainees have asked for more training. Emphasis should be placed on providing training for all LES, follow-up training for LES who have participated in In-Canada courses, updating management systems, and coaching managers to help their employees in the area of training and career development. If this does not happen, there is a danger of losing ground, not to mention some of the goodwill that has been generated in the LES community .

### **Recommendations:**

To ensure the continuous improvement and success of these programs, the evaluation results lead us to make the following recommendations:

- 1. Continue the delivery of existing LES In-Canada Program in its present format.**
- 2. Provide LES In-Canada training on a continuous and strategic basis, in the context of professional and career development planning for each LES. This would include implementation of systematic follow-up of LES training initiatives to reinforce learning.**
- 3. Refine and validate the competencies for each LES target group and develop a “learning curriculum” that would include in-Canada training.**
- 4. Develop better data and information systems about the LES.**
- 5. Train Canada-based program managers to coach and mentor their LES (and CBS) employees.**
- 6. Review and/or update existing course learning objectives , establish overall measurable objectives at the organizational level for the In-Canada Program and develop a standard to evaluate In-Canada courses.**
- 7. Implement a results-based management approach to LES human resource management, including a performance measurement system, and periodic evaluation, which would interact with, and supplement the existing CFSI training evaluation system.**



# EVALUATION OF LOCALLY-ENGAGED STAFF (LES) TRAINING

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this study is to evaluate the LES In-Canada Training Program and the Official Language Distance Learning in the context of the LES Training Strategy. This report includes a review of evaluations undertaken by CFSI and SIE, the 2000 to 2002 DFAIT Annual Learning Surveys administered by Office of the Inspector General (SIX) and CFSI, and other studies.

## 2.0 THE LES TRAINING STRATEGY

The LES Training Strategy is derived from DFAIT's Human Resource Development Strategy (1997-1998). It is a response to the shift towards increasing substitution of Canada-based staff with Locally Engaged Staff in missions and to the fact that LES have increased responsibilities. Therefore there is a need to ensure that such staff receive appropriate training. Drawing from the recommendations of the Human Resource Development Strategy, the Deputy Ministers announced on June 3, 1999, that the Canadian Foreign Service Institute would be tasked with the implementation of a training program for locally engaged staff (LES) and that funding would be made available for this specific purpose.

The LES Training Strategy is delivered by means of courses delivered in-Canada, in-missions, by distance learning, and sometimes through off-site courses taken during working hours or in the employee's time.

### 2.1 The Target Population

As of March 31, 2002 there were 4,861 LES registered in the PeopleSoft database which account for 55% of the total DFAIT population (8810). Of that number, 1,523 are LES at the 0 through 3 levels who perform such duties as chauffeurs, gardeners, household staff, etc. and require little to no work-related training. **Therefore, the approximate number of LES eligible for training stands at 3,338 or 69% of the total LES population.**

According to Business Line Utilization statistics for 2000-2001, there were a total of 4,667 LES. If we use the figure of 69 % of the total LES population as being eligible for training, the estimated number of LES eligible for training in that fiscal year were 3,224. Of these, approximately 1,400 LES worked for Other Government Departments (OGD) programs, 1121 for DFAIT programs, with approximately 700 in DFAIT Corporate Services/Administration. An estimated breakdown of those eligible for training in 2000-2001 by department, geographic area and business line is provided in the following table:

	AMERICAS	ASIA-PACIFIC & AFRICA	EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	GLOBAL & SECURITY POLICY	TRADE, ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY	DFAIT FUND CENTRES
<b>OGD (Federal and Provincial Depts/ Agencies)</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1401</b>
DFAIT (Consular)	61	57	84	1	0	203
DFAIT (International Business Development)	179	181	191	0	0	551
DFAIT (International Security & Cooperation)	26	19	39	6	1	91
DFAIT (Public Diplomacy)	70	45	93	1	0	209
DFAIT (Trade and Economic Policy)	25	16	23	4	0	68
<b>DFAIT Programs: Sub-Total</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1122</b>
<b>DFAIT ADMIN (Corporate Services/ Admin)</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>701</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>1199</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3224</b>

## 2.2 Expenditures

Expenditures on the LES In-Canada Program over the last three fiscal years have been as follows:

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$468,124	\$683,604	\$700,322

The above expenditures include CFSI expenditures as well as additional funding received principally from geographic Area Management Offices (AMAs), and the Trade and Communications Bureaux.

Expenditures for Official Languages distance learning for LES cannot be isolated, but are far less than those for In-Canada training.

## 3.0 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The following evaluation issues have been addressed:

1. Is the rationale for the LES Training Strategy still relevant (See Section 5 - Conclusions)?
2. What training activities have taken place as a result of the LES Training Strategy?
3. What have we learned about LES training from the DFAIT annual training surveys?
4. What have we learned about LES training from previous CFSI evaluations from levels one to three with respect to trainee satisfaction, changes in levels of learning, and degree of application/use of the learning/skills?
5. How effective and efficient have been the In-Canada LES training and the Official Languages distance learning programs based on new survey evidence specially collected for this study?
6. What, if anything, can be learned by benchmarking, in relation to other countries' foreign services and international organizations, with respect to LES training and its evaluation?
7. Overall, what have we learned, and what improvements should be made if any?

The approach that has been taken is to use Management Services (CFSM) statistics on CFSI training, and to combine a synthesis of evaluation information already available, with the generation of new information where there are gaps.

Much information is available from the Annual DFAIT Learning Surveys which have been undertaken in the years 2000 to 2002, the routine level 1 evaluations of courses (reaction) undertaken by CFSI, some level 2 (transfer of learning), and five level 3 (application of learning) course evaluations undertaken by CFSI.

Most of the gaps in information have existed at Kirkpatrick levels 3 (change in behaviour) and 4 (results). New information has been generated in this evaluation with respect to levels three and four for In-Canada courses and Official Languages distance learning. Since CFSI divisions are already undertaking level three evaluations of In-Canada training, and have more planned in the near future, the In-Canada training evaluation (levels three and four) was restricted in most cases<sup>1</sup> to six case study missions. The six case study missions selected<sup>2</sup> were Accra, Buenos Aires, Detroit, Lisbon, Shanghai, and The Hague. Level three and four evaluations were also undertaken of the total Official Language distance learning program as it pertains to LES. This evaluation represents the first attempt at undertaking level 4 evaluations of training courses in DFAIT, and is therefore somewhat experimental. Ideally, level 4 evaluation consists of using the full range of performance indicators at the organizational level. In the absence of a performance measurement framework for DFAIT we assessed the impact based on quantitative and qualitative data received from participants, their supervisors, Heads of Missions (HOMs) and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

The level three and four evaluations for In-Canada and distance learning courses were undertaken by means of intranet delivered electronic questionnaires directed to course participants and their supervisors. The information generated from these questionnaire surveys was then assembled and analysed, and the overall results were discussed in telephone interviews with Heads of Mission (or their delegates) from the six case study missions, and in face to face or telephone interviews with twelve Subject Matter Experts in DFAIT HQ.

#### **4.0 WHAT TRAINING ACTIVITIES HAVE TAKEN PLACE AS A RESULT OF THE LES TRAINING STRATEGY?**

LES training accounted for 15% of the total student days provided by CFSI in 2001-2002 and eligible LES averaged 1.65 days of training. Actual LES trained however numbered 812 and they completed 1,662 courses.

Training opportunities for LES have increased considerably in the last few years<sup>3</sup>. The In-Canada program, Information Technology (IT) and Information Management Systems (IMS) remote learning, language distance training, core skills and externally provided training represent the majority of all training taken by LES.

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<sup>1</sup> There was full coverage of the In-Canada Commercial Officers and Assistants Course because of a special request from the International Business Development program. Also there was full coverage of the In-Canada MAO Pilot Course because only one person had been trained in this course from the six case study missions.

<sup>2</sup> Missions were selected on the basis of geographical representation, total numbers of LES, and total number having completed In-Canada courses up to and including June 30, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> In 1999-2000 the number trained was exceptionally high due to SIGNET, PMI, and other systems related training.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Employees Trained</b>	<b>Courses completed</b>	<b>Student Days</b>
<b>1999-2000</b>	2170	8096	8184
<b>2000-2001</b>	807	1345	4673
<b>2001-2002</b>	812	1662	5349

The following table outlines the student days provided to LES by CFSI programme.

<b>PROGRAMME</b>	<b>STUDENT DAYS</b>		
	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>
In-Canada Programs (LES)	865	1625	1454
Official Language Training	137	913	1862
Core Skills	331	101	233
Financial Management	N/A	N/A	37
Foreign Language Training	79	80	172
Human Resources Management	4	82	7
Consular Administration*	N/A	374	310
Information Management Technology	4126	168	229
Integrated Management System	1613	686	463
Political and Trade Program	641	184	98
Management Development	7	23	46
Individual Professional Training	64	198	190
Training Outside Working Hours	317	239	248
<b>Total CFSI Training</b>	<b>8184</b>	<b>4673</b>	<b>5349</b>

\*Consular Administration courses are managed by Training Section (JPPT).

In 2001-2002, 38% of LES training student days was attributable to the language programme and 27% to the In-Canada Program. The LES population account for 16% of all Official Languages Training which they take through distance learning or local providers.

As of March 31, 2002, 512 LES (or about 19 % of the eligible LES population) had taken part in In-Canada courses:

<b>LES Course</b>	<b># of sessions</b>	<b># of students</b>	<b># of student days</b>
Assistants to Heads of Program	5	107	1070
Accountants & Assistant Accountants	6	87	870
Commercial Officers	9	186	989
Mission Administration Officers	2	29	290
Property & Materiel	2	39	390
Political and Economic Officers	1	14	70
Public Affairs Officers	3	50	265
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>3944</b>

## **5.0 WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM THE DFAIT ANNUAL TRAINING SURVEYS?**

The results of the 2002 DFAIT Annual Training Survey with respect to the LES have been specially summarized for this evaluation, and are to be found in the report “The 2002 Learning Survey Results with Respect to Locally-engaged Staff (LES)”. These results are based on the responses from 380 LES, or just over 11% of the LES population eligible for training. A short synopsis of results is provided in Table 5-1 below.

From these learning surveys it can be concluded that over the 2000-2002 period CFSI has been successful in improving awareness of learning opportunities, usage of, and access to, such opportunities, and general satisfaction with DFAIT’s commitment to training and development. There remains work to be done especially for LES staff who lag behind other DFAIT staff in most dimensions.

The survey data and qualitative comments from respondents, whether LES or otherwise, indicate that one of the main factors related to success or failure with respect to LES perceptions about DFAIT’s training is the mission management factor particularly at the program head level. If management is pro-active and sensitive to LES needs then this does much to increase awareness, improves access to learning opportunities, increases usage, and raises levels of satisfaction, not to mention morale. In line with this, one respondent suggested that “there is not

enough DFAIT training for managers in how to coach employees - both LES and CBS - to help them develop professionally”.

Another important ingredient is a systematic and transparent approach to identifying training needs - which is linked to strong/good management. Respondents' comments suggest that in some missions where there is no systematic approach to career planning and identifying training needs, and no transparent process for selecting course participants in a mission, the in-Canada training program may have the effect of demoralizing those who are not selected.

TABLE 5-1: SUMMARY OF ANNUAL LEARNING SURVEY RESULTS FOR LES

Issues addressed	Survey Results for LES	LES Trend (2000-2002)	Compared to other DFAIT staff
Awareness of training opportunities ("I am well informed about learning opportunities")	<b>49 % awareness.</b> Importance of emails in the context of <b>pro-active management</b>	<b>Improving</b> (the level of awareness was 39 % in 2001)	<b>Low</b> (all DFAIT staff 63% in 2002), but improving
Usage	<b>56 % of LES experienced a learning opportunity in 2002.</b>	<b>Improving:</b> 2000 41 % 2001 55 % 2002 56 %	<b>Low , but improvement since 2000.</b> A slight backslide between 2001 and 2002. Figures for all DFAIT staff: 2000 87 % 2001 65 % 2002 67 %
	<b>37 % used CFSI courses</b>	<b>Increasing use:</b> 2000 11 % 2001 35 % 2002 37 %	<b>Low, marked improvement relative to 2000, but a relative decline since 2001.</b> C-B Non-rotational/ rotational: 2000 38 % /36 % 2001 45 % /50 % 2002 49 % /48 %
Access ("I can access the training and development that I need")	<b>36 % of LES can access the training they need</b>	<b>Improving.</b> In 2001, 30 %	<b>Very low,</b> a gap of just under 20 % continues to exist between LES and C-B rotational/ non-rotational staff
	<b>69 % of LES staff state that they need greater access to external courses/events</b>	N/A	<b>LES are in greater need of external opportunities relative to other DFAIT staff.</b> 59 % of all DFAIT staff state that they need greater access to external courses/events
	<b>87 % of LES staff identify barriers to accessing learning opportunities</b>	<b>Consistent with two previous surveys</b>	<b>87 % of all DFAIT staff identify barriers to accessing learning opportunities</b>
Satisfaction	<b>50 % of LES are satisfied with DFAIT's overall commitment to training</b>	<b>Improving.</b> 15 % increase in the level of satisfaction between 2000 and 2002.	<b>54 % of all DFAIT staff are satisfied</b> with DFAIT's overall commitment to training
	<b>35 % of LES think that their job related needs are met</b>	N/A	<b>43 % of all DFAIT staff think that their job related needs are met</b>
	<b>27 % of LES staff think that their career-related development needs are met</b>	N/A	<b>30 % of all DFAIT staff think that their career-related development needs are met</b>
	<b>43 % of LES staff think that the type of training available/offered within DFAIT met their needs</b>	N/A	<b>42 % of all DFAIT staff think that the type of training available/offered within DFAIT met their needs</b>
	<b>54 % of LES staff are satisfied with the quality of training they received</b>	N/A	<b>68 % of DFAIT staff are satisfied with the quality of training they received</b>



## 6.0 WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF IN-CANADA LES TRAINING?

CFSI assesses the effectiveness of training using the four-level model developed by Donald Kirkpatrick. According to this model, evaluation should always begin with level one, and then, as time and budget allows, should move sequentially through levels two, three, and four. Each successive level represents a more probing measure of the effectiveness of the training program, but at the same time requires a more rigorous and time-consuming analysis. In essence, level one through four evaluations attempt to answer the following questions: Did they like it? Did they learn it? Did they use it? Does it have an impact?

### 6.1 Level 1 - Did They Like It?

Level one evaluations were done by CFSI through questionnaires at the end of each course delivery or module. The overall average for the 26 deliveries is 4.26 on a scale of 5 (with 1 being negative and 5 being positive) or 85%.

A breakdown of level one ratings by course follows:

Course	Number of deliveries	Course average
Accountants & Assistant Accountants	6	4.09
Assistants to Heads of Programs	3	4.12
Commercial Officers	9	4.3
Mission Admin Officers	2	4.36
Political/Economic Officers	1	4.22
Property & Materiel	2	4.25
Public Affairs Officers	3	4.45
<b>Overall Average</b>		<b>4.26</b>

Overall, comments from LES were very positive and confirm the favorable quantitative rating. Participants indicated they had learned new skills, how to access the tools available to assist them in their work and about Canada and DFAIT. They appreciated meeting colleagues from HQ and missions and sharing best practices. In summary, they liked the courses.

A common theme across courses and deliveries was the lack of time to cover and absorb all the information. Participants wanted more elaborate discussions on the topics of greatest relevance to their work and wanted to use mission cases in exercises. They also indicated a preference for practical exercises to learn the subject matter rather than the use of too much theory. There were negative comments regarding some internal SMEs' ability to format and

deliver their presentations to convey the needed information. A few complaints were received on the use of English SMEs on French courses.

## 6.2 Level 2: Did They Learn It?

Self-assessments were conducted for three of the LES In-Canada courses through the use of questionnaires before and after the course. Following are the average results of the self-assessments:

Course	Average rated knowledge of specific topics		Variance
	Before	After	
Accountants & Assistant Accountants	50%	77%	+27%
Assistants to Heads of Programs	51%	83%	+32%
Property & Materiel	48%	85%	+37%
Overall Average	50%	79%	+29%

Participant's self-assessments show a marked increase in their knowledge. This would indicate that participants believe that their knowledge has increased on specific topics as a result of the training. However, it is not readily apparent what weight or relevancy each topic has in the employees' work environment. This calls for more in-depth analysis which would help assess whether more training is needed on specific topics to increase their effectiveness.

## 6.3 Levels 3 and 4: Did They Use It, and Did It Have an Impact?

Prior to March 31, 2002, formal evaluations at this level had been conducted for two courses<sup>4</sup> and informal reviews had been done on three other courses<sup>5</sup>. More recently the another study undertook level three and four evaluations of all LES In-Canada courses. Sample sizes were generally too low for all but one course (Commercial Officers) to draw conclusions about the degree of use of the learning and its impacts with respect to the specific professional and technical objectives for each course. However the pooled results with respect to all LES In-Canada course evaluations provide a more reliable basis for drawing conclusions about their effectiveness.

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<sup>4</sup>. These included: 1. Validation of LES Accountants and Assistant Accountants Course In-Canada Program (ICP-0551)", Tweedsmuir Group, February 26, 2002; AND 2. "Validation of LES Property and Materiel Course In-Canada Program", Tweedsmuir Group, March 31, 2002.

<sup>5</sup>. These included: 1. LES Public Affairs Course - Asia Pacific Session Winter 2001: Level III Evaluation Results, February, 2002; 2. "Evaluation Report (Third Level) of the In-Canada program for LES Assistants to Program Managers and Heads of Mission", CFSI, March 2000; and 3. LES Commercial Officers, emails from TCS and CFSD, 2001.

What follows is:

1. A summary and interpretation of these results at levels 3 and 4 with respect to the generic objectives of In-Canada courses particularly as these apply to the six case study missions.
2. More detailed syntheses of level 3 results in relation to specific professional and technical objectives for five in-Canada courses<sup>6</sup>, using pooled results from the various evaluations conducted.

### **6.3.1 Results in Relation to the Generic Objectives for the LES In-Canada Courses**

All six in-Canada courses were rated against the following generic objectives<sup>7</sup>, i.e. to:

- provide direct exposure to Canada.
- provide direct exposure to DFAIT.
- provide direct access to subject matter experts.
- provide an environment conducive to networking with colleagues who share similar responsibilities in Canadian missions around the world.
- provide non-rotational DFAIT employees at HQ with an opportunity to meet with their Locally Engaged colleagues from overseas.
- underline the value that the Department places on the contribution of LES.
- prepare the groundwork for effective communication with the group.
- provide insights to cultural differences.
- provide an opportunity for participants to improve skills which are important to the successful delivery of services at mission.
- provide an opportunity for skill enhancement in the work environment that is for both personal and professional development.
- maintain both personal and professional capabilities in a demanding and changing work environment.

The results of the surveys of trainees, supervisors, Heads of Mission (HOMs) and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are overwhelmingly positive with respect to the idea of providing LES courses in Canada, and are consistent with the Level 3 evaluation results coming from earlier CFSI studies.

**LES Trainee** responses indicated that training in Canada provided a definite and positive impact on their job application as it relates to participant's knowledge of Canada and of DFAIT's structure. The training provided them with a better understanding of Canada and its cultural differences, and gave them an increased ability to identify the right person at DFAIT HQ to assist

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<sup>6</sup>LES Accountants and Assistant Accountants Course, LES Property and Materiel Course, LES Public Affairs Course, LES Assistants to Program Managers and Heads of Mission, and LES Commercial Officers.

<sup>7</sup> The results should be treated with caution since we used a set of objectives that were reconstructed without any indication of their relative importance.

them in providing service to their clients. Also, the training provided them with opportunities to network with other mission personnel to share ideas, best practices and ways to resolve issues. In their opinion their In-Canada experience has led to significantly increased efficiency and organizational effectiveness.

**Supervisors** corroborated the trainee respondent results, and emphasized the value of having training courses provided in Canada.

**Heads of Mission** recognized the value of having the training in Canada, and some suggested that it is indispensable and it should be seen as an essential investment. In-Canada LES training allows participants to gain concrete Canadian experience from which they benefit in terms of:

- Reinforcing cultural awareness of Canada and making it easier for LES to work with Canadians and promote Canadian objectives;
- Increasing motivation and interest in LES daily work and functions;
- Allowing team-building and enhancement of powerful networks based on incommensurable use and exchange of best practices from one country to another;
- Building engagement, confidence and loyalty to DFAIT and to Canadian missions.

Some HOMs have noticed a positive impact on LES efficiency to perform in their daily work and consequently received, in some cases, very positive feedback from local clients in terms of the ability of LES to respond to their requests and to give them the right information in a short time frame. Several of the six HOMs mentioned that in some cases, the LES slip back into their old ways after a while back at the mission. The benefits of the training are not always long-lasting in terms of increased efficiencies.

All **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)** agreed that the global benefits of the training programs made all the In-Canada training initiatives worthwhile. Some benefits cited by the interviewees included:

- **Cultural awareness** – being exposed to Canada, and being able to see the geography and feel the “energy” of the country firsthand facilitates more effective working relationships with Canadians, and decreases the amount of time spent dealing with “frameworks of reference” in the Missions. The SMEs play less of a role acting as intermediaries or “interpreters” and the LES can deal more directly with issues and other people.
- **Exposure to HQ** – both the opportunity to see headquarters and to meet contacts in person were seen as critical benefits of the program. Respondents cited a stronger sense of connection with HQ and the broader DFAIT organization.
- **Network-building** – The opportunity to put names to faces of HQ contacts was seen to build stronger relationships between the Missions and those they deal with at HQ. The opportunity to build global networks with those in similar positions around the world to facilitate sharing of best practices and lessons learned was also seen as important. The nature of these relationships was seen to be stronger because of the personal contact afforded by the In-Canada Training.

- **Staff Morale/Job Satisfaction** – The LES feel more like full team members of DFAIT and Canada, and do not see themselves as employed solely by the Mission. They feel more valued and as important as their Canada-based counterparts. LES find their work more challenging because they are performing functions at a less basic level.
- **Increased Confidence** - Interviewees cited an overall increase in confidence which contributed to more proactive employees. Managers at the Missions are saving time because the LES are deferring to them less often.
- **Consistent Work Practices** – Because of the nature of rotationality, many LES have multiple supervisors, with different approaches. Before the LES In-Canada Training Program, the major source of learning of specific job skills was on-the-job training with the supervisor. The In-Canada program helps ensure consistent similar messages and consistent work practices around the world.
- **Better Image of Canada** - More effective and knowledgeable LES provide a better image of Canada internationally.

Not all SMEs felt that they could speak directly to the impact of the training insofar as number of enquiries (phone calls, Emails) received in their area, etc. was concerned, but they had heard positive comments from others around the general impact of the training. Those SMEs who did discuss the direct impact noted the following:

- All respondents felt that the nature of the calls had become much more advanced. There were less incoming calls with “basic” questions and the nature of the questions pointed to more knowledgeable LES.
- Some felt that the calls had decreased, while others felt that there were still the same number of calls, but their nature had changed as noted above.
- Most respondents felt that the LES had a much better sense of where to direct their enquiries; some cited better use of call centers.
- Some respondents felt that their area was the “default” contact person as the LES now knew them, so in some cases they were getting more general enquiries; but this was not seen as a “bad thing” as the program area wants an open-door policy.
- Many respondents felt that the LES were more service-oriented after training, although it was noted that sometimes this effect is lost shortly upon return to the mission, where “old habits” are adopted after the initial enthusiasm wears off.
- LES seem to be more discerning in using the right tools and contacting the right people, and the use of intranet sites has increased.

On the basis of the above survey results it may be concluded that all the generic objectives of In-Canada courses have been achieved - in most cases to a very high degree at both levels 3 and 4. The In-Canada experience is largely responsible for the high achievements in relation to the generic objectives of these courses. There are well documented positive impacts on DFAIT and Canadian missions.

### **6.3.2 Highlights of Results in Relation to the Professional and Technical Training Objectives of In-Canada Training**

#### **LES Accountants and Assistant Accountants Course**

Pooled results indicate that the LES Accountants and Assistant Accountants Course is “very relevant”, and:

- the sharing of learning was beneficial to missions.
- over 65% of participants apply the knowledge and skills gained in every subject area covered by the course.
- the most successful modules were Financial Accounting Operations, IMS, and Travel Directives.
- it is very important for the course to be held in Canada.
- it is very beneficial to have post-course contacts with classmates.
- course materials were useful.
- the course should be maintained essentially in its current format.
- it is essential training and particularly effective for implementing a new financial system.

#### **LES Property and Materiel Course**

Pooled results indicate that the course is “relevant to very relevant”, and beneficial. Also:

- all course modules were considered useful, with the most successful modules being Mission Property Management Plan, Materiel Management Life Cycle, Annual Inspections and Quality Service Delivery. The least successful was Air Quality.
- it is “important to very important” for the course to be held in Canada.
- it is beneficial to have post-course contacts with classmates.
- the course materials were useful.
- it should be maintained essentially in its current format with a few minor adjustments.
- it is rated as very useful by HOMs since their clients are Canadian.
- SMEs rated the course as very effective in providing core skills and competencies.

### **LES Public Affairs Course**

Pooled results indicate that:

- knowledge and skills taught were applicable and were applied to the job.
- knowledge and skills increased.
- course materials were moderately useful.
- The course is very relevant in particular as it pertains to the public affairs role in DFAIT, DFAIT's structure and functions and policy issues.
- it is very beneficial to have contact with other mission personnel.
- participants are better at dealing with media and public speaking.
- the most useful modules were public diplomacy, Ottawa Policy Arena, media relations, foreign and domestic policy priorities.
- the results of training as stated by managers were : a more global perspective, more actively looking for opportunities to collaborate with regional colleagues, better appreciation of their role within the organization and more confidence in managing issues.
- HOMs identified the usefulness of course in terms of practical learning.

### **LES Assistants to Program Managers and Heads of Mission**

The pooled results indicate that:

- the 15 topics covered were very useful
- course objectives were met for the most part.
- participants acquired knowledge and increased their skills.
- results include improved procedures at the mission and increased competency and confidence in the workplace.
- it is beneficial to meet HQ and other mission personnel.
- HOMs rated the course as tremendously useful for participants and SMEs see it as less effective and more of a reward.

### **LES Commercial Officers and Assistants Course**

The pooled results indicate that:

- the value of having training in Canada is very significant.
- participants increased their knowledge regarding DFAIT, Canada and their role by 22%, Trade Commissioner Service's New Approach by 21%, how to network by 17% and serving clients by 15%.
- the impact was greatest on understanding the network of domestic service providers and when to refer clients to them, understanding and applying the New Approach, understanding DFAIT's structure and functions, and the use of HORIZONS and the Post Support Unit.
- the use of electronic tools is a time-saver.
- it is very significant to have exchanges with other participants and HQ staff.

- knowledge of Canadian and business cultures provides greater understanding of their decisions and increased capacity to promote in local market.
- the associated outreach program is invaluable. When combined with trade show, it allows for greater knowledge of sectoral capabilities.
- HOMs rated the training as invaluable, and very beneficial in terms of technical knowledge.

The results at level 3 are quite strong with respect to the professional and technical objectives of each In-Canada course that has been examined. They demonstrate there has been a high degree of application of the knowledge and skills in the workplace. All participants, with a few exceptions, believe the course was relevant and of benefit to them. Overall, the In-Canada training program had a positive impact on LES' understanding of Canada and its culture, DFAIT, of their role, where their work fits in the organization, in their ability to identify the right contacts at HQ and in fostering a good working relationship with these contacts. Also, LES benefited immensely from meeting counterparts from other missions, and exchanging best practices. Supervisors indicated that employees improved their knowledge and skills in areas relevant to them and increased their effectiveness in performing their duties. They now have a greater appreciation for "the big picture". There are also some detectable, if not marked, increases in LES trainee morale, confidence, loyalty, and a sense of belonging to DFAIT.

## **7.0 HOW EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT HAS BEEN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (OLT) DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM?**

### **7.1 Training Objectives and Evaluation Results**

The training objectives for the OLT distance learning courses were to:

- provide employees with the required writing skills in French and in English to perform their current and future duties;
- provide employees with the required reading skills in French to perform their current and future duties.

The participant response rate was excellent. However, supervisors had difficulty evaluating the impact of the training (mostly because many of them had not been sufficiently long in their mission to be able to distinguish between before and after competencies). Therefore, the main focus will be on employee feedback in this section.

A majority (19/26) of participants had chosen French as the target language. This choice can be understood through the analysis of the Missions where the trainee respondent population was to be found. Most of these Missions happened to be located in countries where English is the administrative or second most widely used language (even though on a global basis, CFSI provides more English than French distance learning courses). In this particular case, we can presume that the choice of French as the target language is a logical one in so much as some LES already have a good command of English.



A summary of evaluation results follows:

- All participants use the target language in their work and 40% in their personal lives.
- English course participants' use is very often (71%), often (14%) and rarely (14%) while French course participants report use as very often (5%), often (39%) and rarely (56%).
- Knowledge and skills increased on average by 11% for English and 16% for French course participants.
- Impact has been greatest in the following areas: English - using appropriate expressions when writing (17%), responding without hesitation to written communication (15%), using the correct verbal expressions (11%) and writing clearly and effectively using appropriate style and tone (11%); French - responding without hesitation to written communication (37%), writing clearly and effectively using appropriate style and tone (17%) and complying with grammatical rules (16%).
- Most French course participants report having a lack of or limited opportunity to use French in their missions.
- Positive impact on employees' ability to work and communicate in the target language, satisfaction and self-confidence.
- HOMs rated training as very useful and quite effective.

The overall results demonstrate that the training had a relatively low but positive impact on both employee job application and DFAIT's organizational effectiveness.

**Trainees** indicated that the Language Distance Training program had higher positive impacts on participants' ability to summarize a text in the target language, to be more effective writers by improving the clarity of their writing and encouraging them to use the appropriate style and tone in their communications, to use appropriate expressions when writing in the target language, to comply with grammatical rules, and to respond to written communication in the language of the sender without hesitation.

Comments from trainees (a complete set of comments is provided in Annex 5) indicated that the DFAIT Language training program had a positive impact on employee satisfaction.

**Supervisors** detected improvements mainly in relation to participants' ability to use appropriate expressions when writing in the target language, in being able to write clearly and effectively using style and tone, in being able to comply with grammatical rules, in using correct verbal expressions, and in being able to summarize a text in the target language. However, supervisors agree with participants that the training had a relatively low impact on their ability to develop a broad vocabulary in the target language and on the frequency at which they write and correct (in the case of other people) texts in the target language. This may reflect the fact that for most respondents to the survey French was the target language, and some LES found that there was little opportunity to use and practice French in their missions.

Supervisors noted that the courses had a relatively high but moderate impact on employee satisfaction. Otherwise their overall assessment was lower than that of the trainees, while acknowledging that the course had some impact.

Some supervisors' comments indicated that OLT training certainly increased employee's self-confidence since it increased their ability to work and communicate in the target language.

**HOMs** rated the OLT distance learning courses as very useful and quite effective. In their view it definitely increases LES's level of comprehension and confidence in the targeted language, in turn increasing client satisfaction.

**SMEs** were not surveyed on this subject.

## **7.2 Conclusions re OLT Distance Learning**

On the basis of the above, it may be concluded that the Official Languages distance learning program is well run, has good content and tools, and is much appreciated by trainees. There has been application of skills, and supervisors have reported positive impacts in terms of increased employee confidence and client satisfaction. This program has been a success in relation to the objectives established for it.

The results for OLT distance learning are influenced by the fact the target language for most participants was French, and judging from some of the comments (and the figures provided above), some have lacked the opportunity to use French in their particular missions. Meanwhile some expressed a lack of confidence and/or a fear of being misunderstood in the target language.

Suggested improvements included more assignments/homework in order to have a better revision of what was learned or follow-up group practice. Also, some LES suggested supplementing the course with direct language training.

## **8.0 BENCHMARKING WITH OTHER COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

A cursory study to determine the level of effort being placed by other countries in training LES or their equivalents, and measuring the impact of their training activities was conducted. The various methodologies used to gather the required data included interviews (with the New Zealand and Great Britain consulates, and with a UNDP representative), web based searches of various Foreign Affairs Ministries of countries around the world as well as literature review (of approximately 100 articles and books on measuring the impact of training and development).

### **8.1 Conclusions re Benchmarking**

Measuring the impact of training and development activities is at its very infancy in most government agencies around the world. Without having access to all of the learning and development material available at each benchmarked country, it is difficult to make any comparisons or draw any conclusions. One of the more advanced groups regarding the training of foreign nationals seems to be the United Nation's Development Program (UNDP). They have developed a process that supports a learning and development culture by:

- a) having an individual from each country become the Learning Manager (a voluntary role) where this individual assures the support of learning in their office/country. They are given training for this role through a 10 day learning and coaching workshop that equips them to support staff re: learning.
- b) As indicated above, they rely on a mixed delivery approach to training by extensive use of E-learning (their web site <http://learning.undp.org> is quite exhaustive), classroom training as well as a complete resource library of books, videos and self-learning tools.

Other conclusions include:

1. Selection and participation in training programs must be needs based.
2. Training program design, development and evaluation must be linked to performance standards.

## **9.0 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

### **9.1 Is the Rationale for the LES Training Strategy Still Relevant?**

There is no doubt that the rationale for the LES Training Strategy is still relevant, indeed it is critically important for DFAIT. This conclusion is based on the following:

- LES are still providing services that were formerly provided by Canada-based personnel, and their numbers<sup>8</sup> and responsibilities have continued to increase. In addition, because of the rotationality of Canada-based staff the LES represent the corporate memory of Canada's missions, and should receive high priority treatment.
- Only 26 % of the eligible LES population has been trained so far. The percentage that has received in-Canada training is 19 %.
- DFAIT annual training survey results (see Section 5) indicate that demand for LES training is very high, and that this demand is insufficiently met.
- LES who had received In-Canada training and Official language distance learning courses (see Sections 6, and 7) indicate that these courses were much appreciated and very relevant to them. For the most part, their supervisors agree with their employees' assessment.
- HOMs in the six case study missions, and the twelve subject matter experts agree that there is a real need for LES training, and on a continuous basis. What is more, In-Canada LES training is regarded as being particularly effective in making LES personnel feel part of the Canadian team, in increasing their understanding of Canada and its values, and in motivating them and raising their morale.

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<sup>8</sup>The total population of LES rose from 4436 in 1998-99 to 4667 in 2000-01.

## 9.2 Views of the Major Stakeholders About LES Training Effectiveness

In the eyes of the major Stakeholders, how do they rate the outcome of LES Training?

**The LES who have received training** generally have a high degree of enthusiasm, in particular for the In-Canada experience. There have been increases in understanding of Canada and its culture, DFAIT HQ, and in networking ability with other missions, not to mention increases in confidence and morale, and sense of belonging. Work pressures and lack of management support sometimes restrict application of the learning and nullify the benefits of the training to a greater or lesser extent.

The OLT distance learning program is considered to be well run, and is much appreciated by those LES who have taken it.

**Supervisors** sometimes have an enthusiasm that exceeds that of their LES employees who have received In-Canada training. There is some inability to see the “before” and “after” due to the supervisors’ rotationality/mobility. Some supervisors have reported on their LES employees increased confidence and effectiveness in using the target language, as a result of OLT distance learning.

**Heads of Mission** in the six case study missions were highly satisfied with the LES In-Canada training programs. In their view the In-Canada LES training is indispensable and it should be seen as an essential investment.

They believe that these programs helped reduce skills gaps observed in the 2000 LES Training Strategy Discussion Paper. The shortcomings that have existed over the past five years are now being addressed. There are still improvements to make, but it is a major shift compared to what DFAIT was doing in the past. According to their perception and to LES feedback, training programs are very useful, practical and designed to facilitate Locally Engaged Staff’s jobs. Training content is in most cases very accurate and appropriate to LES’ needs. The In-Canada training program is a good way to provide Locally Engaged Staff with a concrete Canadian experience, and has a positive influence on:

1. Allowing skills development, particularly with regards to technical knowledge.
- 2- Facilitating access to resources, tools and the right HQ contact person which improved considerably LES’s ability to respond to client requests.
3. Creating a teamwork environment within and between missions.

The Heads of Mission’s overall satisfaction level rated 8 out of 10. They recognized that very little could be done to make it better. LES came back with a higher motivation with regards to their work. They are more proactive in their work and less isolated. This is probably due to a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the organization. All Heads of Mission encourage DFAIT to continue with the LES In-Canada Training programs and recommend increasing the number of individuals who can participate since it is beneficial for new

recruits (after six months to a year of experience) to rapidly perform in their work and for experienced Locally Engaged Staff to up-date or refresh their skills.

OLT training was rated by HOMs as very useful and quite effective. It definitely increased LES's level of comprehension and confidence in the targeted language, in turn increasing client satisfaction.

**Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)** also felt that the LES In-Canada training program had a very positive impact on participants and was definitely worth the investment. While some found it difficult to speak directly to improved efficiencies in work, they all felt that the program provided numerous benefits and should be deemed essential. This assessment was based not only the specific subject matter of the various programs, but also on the cultural awareness and network-building inherent in the training. Some suggested that there are greater returns on the investment in LES training than on Canada-based staff training, since the LES have less contextual knowledge to begin with, and also benefit from the cultural awareness component.

SMEs mentioned some **unintended impacts/effects**:

- In providing SAP and IMS skills to Accountants and Assistant Accountants, they have become a more valuable commodity in the local market, and some have moved on to new career opportunities.
- Increased promotion/visibility of the Public Affairs function has increased demand/expectations, but additional resources have not been provided.
- One respondent noted that at times SMEs are put in an awkward position, as they are training the LES in certain practices which are not supported by the senior managers at the Missions. The LES then call them for support, and sometimes they can do little to influence the situation.
- Opportunity to conduct LES focus groups for other initiatives (e.g., competency development).
- The selection of some participants over others can cause some resentment at the Mission; some employees feel left out.

Another unintended impact gleaned in the Annual Training Surveys is that the LES who have not received training sometimes have a sense of disappointment, and sometimes cynicism/suspicion at being left out. Accessibility to training is still a major issue in some missions, and the transparency of selection processes is a vital ingredient.

### **9.3 An Overall LES Training Scorecard**

The results of this evaluation synthesis are summed up in the following LES Training Strategy Scorecard.

Criteria	Rating
Rationale	Still highly relevant. Some (e.g. HOMs and SMEs) say the rationale is more relevant than ever and “critically needed/essential”.
Resources applied	1999-2002 - \$1.85 million invested in in-Canada training courses.
Numbers of LES trained	In-Canada training - 19% of target population since 1999.
Awareness of LES training opportunities	Low but improving. Best means of communication about training opportunities - emails. The encouragement of managers is also vital.
LES usage of training	Low, especially compared to CBS, but improving.
Access to LES training	Low, but improving. Main barriers are work pressures, financial constraints, and lack of encouragement by managers. Unintended negative impacts on morale where trainee selection for in-Canada courses is not transparent, since training program may give rise to perception of favoritism on the part of managers.
Satisfaction with DFAIT’s Commitment to LES Training	Low, but improving.
Results of Level 1 evaluations - satisfaction with courses	Initial reaction to the course (smile sheet) reveals high levels of satisfaction.
Results of Level 2 evaluations - degree of learning	Self-assessments indicate very positive results
Results of Level 3 evaluations - use/application of new knowledge/skills	Positive results with respect to core/generic objectives related to in-Canada experience, and to the more technical objectives of training. Barriers to application of learning include work pressures, and lack of management support. Positive impacts, especially on LES confidence and morale. Some evidence of some retrogression without training repeats.
Results of Level 4 evaluations - impact	Impact at the organizational level has been overwhelmingly positive. Results include the solving of system and procedural problems, improved work processes, better communication and increased efficiency of overall programs at the mission. Increased level of networking is an important outcome and could lead to increased exports and increased profile for Canada.
<b>Overall Results</b>	<b>LES training objectives are being met, and training has contributed to increases in individual and organizational effectiveness and efficiency.</b>
Performance Compared to Other Countries/ International Organizations: Benchmarking	Canada is placing more emphasis on domestic HQ in-Canada training. Others such as Australia, Great Britain and New Zealand Foreign Services are reported to be training within country of LES location, using a mix of regional, on-site and distance learning. The UNDP has a systematic LES training approach that should be studied further as it may be a source of best practices.

In conclusion:

1. LES training is essential to DFAIT, and much more is needed.
2. That DFAIT cannot afford to have a large number of LES who cannot access training. The momentum for LES training must continue to grow, and it must be sustainable.
3. LES training programs have been well designed and delivered.
4. For those LES who have received training the benefits for the trainees have been huge and much appreciated, and DFAIT has benefitted as an organization.
5. We have only scratched the surface. Even more benefits will materialize if DFAIT addresses some basic issues with respect human resource and program management. In 1999/2000, when the LES training program began, CFSI was moving into a major LES human resources management vacuum, and in so doing has had some major successes and raised expectations in the LES community. Emphasis should be placed on providing training for all LES, follow-up training for LES who have received In-Canada training, updating management systems, and coaching managers to help their employees in the area of training and career development. If this does not happen, there is a danger of losing ground, not to mention some of the goodwill in the LES community that has been generated.

## **10.0 WHERE IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE**

### **10.1 Suggestions and Ideas for Improvement from Heads of Mission and Subject Matter Experts**

**Heads of Mission** recommend providing In-Canada training at the early stage of the LES career. Most felt they should at least be in the job for 6 months to one year before going. With such early training there will be better impacts on their job performance. Some Heads of Mission mentioned the importance of having the training in Canada for senior Locally Engaged Staff. In-Canada training is a powerful strategic tool on which DFAIT should leverage.

**Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)** provided some suggestions for improvements, and these are noted below:

- Ensure that the course material remains current and relevant, and allow enough time to absorb the information.
- Balance supply and demand – still high demand for Property and Materiel Management and Program Assistants; therefore, more courses should be offered in these areas in the short to medium-term.
- “Second-stage” training – need to start thinking about bringing LES back for more advanced training (Intermediate as opposed to Basic) and to further broaden their context.

- May want to consider some sort of certification process and ensure training is tied to competencies.
- Receptionist/Secretary Training – Several respondents felt that training for this group was essential as they are the ones on the “front lines”. A greater cultural awareness was seen to be especially important for those dealing with Public Affairs and with Canadians in distress.
  - More attention to smaller missions – Several respondents noted that the In-Canada training is especially important in smaller missions where the support network and local expertise is not as strong, and where local training may not be available.
  - High Risk Missions – For financial training, focus on missions that have been assessed as having a high financial risk (based on corruption, complexity of financial function, etc.)
  - Years of Service – While several respondents see new staff as a priority for training, others feel that it is equally valuable for long-serving employees.

A number of suggestions were made for more training from participants and from annual survey respondents. Some have been identified below. Others are included in “The 2002 Learning Survey Results with Respect to Locally-engaged Staff (LES)” and in other evaluations:

- ▶ Better understanding of how centers of decision-making work in Canada.
- ▶ More training on the “how to” for Trade Officers and more sectoral training to allow exchange of information and to network in the region.
- ▶ More training (majority comment) for themselves and colleagues.
- ▶ More opportunities to network with other participants.
- ▶ More contacts with other Team Canada members/network.
- ▶ Follow-up through discussions on specific current issues by way of teleconferences.
- ▶ Training should be offered regularly to keep improving our competencies.
- ▶ Arrange for follow-up training in the region so that we can meet similar people with similar problems.
- ▶ Offer varying degrees of course - beginner, intermediate and or specifics.
- ▶ Business writing.
- ▶ Leadership skills
- ▶ Standardized orientation course for all staff.
- ▶ More Official Languages Training.
- ▶ More focus on Canadian values and exercising judgment.
- ▶ More focus on fraud awareness and the requirements that are mandatory to reduce fraud.
- ▶ Public Affairs – those with exposure to the public should get priority.
- ▶ Have refresher course every two year to maintain and increase skills.
- ▶ Increase the number of distance courses/learning opportunities.
- ▶ Provide greater resources for external training.
- ▶ Continue visits to Canada and appropriate institutions to maintain and upgrade knowledge to serve clients effectively.
- ▶ Design training for senior employees or give them access to pursue higher level training.



## 11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following represents a number of recommendations based on the analysis of the information:

### 1. **Continue the delivery of existing LES In-Canada Program in its present format.**

Results of LES In-Canada course evaluations indicate a high degree of learning and application as well as positive benefits to the participants, their mission and DFAIT. Groups should be as homogeneous as possible in terms of knowledge and skills to maximize learning and exchange. To lessen the pressure of participants having to learn a lot over a short period and to ensure course participants are at the same level, consideration might be given to having certain modules provided through distance learning before the In-Canada course. Some course participants also indicated a desire to collate and distribute best practices.

#### Management response

*CFSI will continue to deliver the LES In-Canada Program in its present format providing that funds are available and that the Program continues to earn highly rated evaluations which reflect a positive impact on the work of LES. CFSI has delivered 8 courses in FY 2002-2003 and has expanded the Program to include an In-Canada course for Receptionists.*

### 2. **Provide LES In-Canada training on a continuous and strategic basis, in the context of professional and career development planning for each LES. This would include implementation of systematic follow-up of LES training initiatives to reinforce learning.**

To date, only 19% of the eligible LES population has participated in In-Canada Programs without counting the staff turnover. These courses have proven effective and the in-Canada experience is especially relevant for Trade and Public Affairs Officers whose intimate knowledge of Canada is integral to their work. In-Canada training should also be available to more experienced officers who are sometimes “set in their ways” of doing things and supervise “junior officers” targeted for this program. It is imperative that they have the same reference. There is also a need to reinforce learning through follow-up training as identified by the employees and by HOMs as employees sometimes revert to the “old way” of doing things.

#### Management response

*As funds permit, CFSI will continue to offer LES In-Canada training on a continuous basis. 694 LES will have participated in the In-Canada Program by the end of this fiscal year which represents approximately 21% of the eligible LES*

*community (not taking into account staff turnover). We will continue to work with the appropriate divisions and Area Management Offices in the strategic selection of the LES.*

*CFSI will evaluate the feasibility of implementing follow-up initiatives to In-Canada LES training and Official Languages Distance learning, whether it be on-line courses or discussion fora, or regional training on specific objectives, to reinforce learning.*

*CFSI established an LES Training Guide in 1999 and a Mission Training Curriculum (February 2001) which outlines available courses to all mission staff. CFSI is working with missions, through designated training coordinators, to determine mission training needs. An on-line tool "Mission Training Needs Assessment Form" was developed to assist missions in this regard. Periodic surveys are conducted to determine the training needs for the specific target groups and then courses are scheduled in the appropriate language to meet stated needs.*

**3. Refine and validate the competencies for each LES target group and develop a "learning curriculum" that would include in-Canada training.**

Competencies were identified in the LES Training Strategy document. There is a need to refine and validate these competencies with Departmental experts. An update of these will help ensure the training is relevant to the priority activities of each group. Competencies should then be translated into a learning curriculum for LES (including distance learning). This will help in designing further training and help in assessing skills development in future evaluations. In-Canada training should be considered an integral part of the learning curriculum given its positive benefits and impact on the organization. LES are the corporate memory of the missions and they have identified the need for training and/or additional training. This need is genuine.

**Management response**

*The Department is moving toward a competency based HR management system. The competencies for the following courses; Accountants and Assistant Accountants, Property and Materiel, Assistants to Heads of Program and Mission Administration Officers and Office Managers, were validated during the Resource Management analysis in the fall of 2002 and a curriculum for each of the target groups developed. The competencies for the new Receptionist course were validated during the pilot delivery, and with minor adjustments, remain almost identical to what were developed in 1996. We will continue the practice of carrying out a small targeted needs analysis before each in-Canada course to ensure that any changes to priorities or procedures are taken into account in the delivery.*

**4. Develop better data and information systems about the LES.**

The June 18, 2002 draft Price Waterhouse study on DFAIT's Organizational Health and Talent Dynamics shows that data and information systems concerning LES need to be improved drastically. This is basic to better targeting of LES learning initiatives, and improved design and planning of courses and delivery systems.

**Management response**

*HRL along with SMSH have now entered over 5,000 LES in the PeopleSoft database and HRL is now reviewing and making corrections to the data. The data regarding the Program they are affiliated with in PeopleSoft is of limited value for the training function. If this field is ever updated in PeopleSoft, it could help clarify the number of LES affiliated with each business line and increase CFSI's capability to plan its annual schedule of courses. CFSI is working with our HR partners and SMSH on ways to improve PeopleSoft and its use.*

**5. Train Canada-based program managers to coach and mentor their LES (and CB) employees.**

There is a great need to train managers to coach and mentor LES. Some course participants have said they never got any training or coaching during 5 to 20 years of employment with the mission. Only 35% of all respondents to the Annual DFAIT Training Survey have stated that their managers help them identify their learning needs. Managers are critical to the learning process; they are key to directing the employees to the training they need and they are a key link in the reinforcement of learning.

**Management response**

*CFSI will integrate a coaching element in its management development courses and provide managers with tools to assist them in this task. It should be noted that in some cases it may be difficult for managers to coach and mentor on subjects with which they themselves have limited expertise.*

**6. Review and/or update existing course learning objectives , establish overall measurable objectives at the organizational level for the In-Canada Program and develop a standard to evaluate In-Canada courses.**

There is a need to review and/or develop measurable objectives at the course level to help assess if learning objectives have been met and at the organizational level to assess the impact of the overall program. These "measurable objectives" are crucial to any credible evaluation. CFSI should adopt a standard by which level 1, 2 and 3 evaluations are done.

**Management response**

*Course objectives will be reviewed and updated in connection with a planned review of content and learning methodologies. In light of the broad range of employment categories targeted by the in-Canada program we believe, given current levels of resources, that it would be impractical to attempt to develop overall objectives at the organizational level. We will continue to evaluate courses in accordance with the Kirkpatrick standard and will remain alert for opportunities to refine our evaluation tools and procedures.*

- 7. Implement a results-based management approach to LES human resource management, including a performance measurement system, and periodic evaluation, which would interact with, and supplement the existing CFSI training evaluation system.**

CFSI and other DFAIT human resource managers have already shown a laudable interest in performance measurement and evaluation, and have built up considerable expertise in this area. This interest should be encouraged further, so that DFAIT can be better positioned to address the basic investment allocation issues with respect to LES human resource initiatives and training.

**Management response**

*We recognize that results-based management with an associated performance management system would be ideal. However, we believe that this approach would need to be adapted to the particulars of the different programs as well as the various delivery contexts and environments, and therefore would require an up-front time investment which would be difficult to take on in the foreseeable future. The only program where this could be envisaged at this time, with a minimum of ground work, is Trade. This is because considerable effort has already been put into the New Approach @ Work to articulating the Trade services and developing the required competencies and performance management tools to measure results and competencies. The recommendation could therefore be considered for implementation in that restricted context.*

**ANNEX I: REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

2002 Discussion Paper on Training

LES Training Strategy, June 1999.

LES Training Guide, 2001.

“DFAIT Locally Engaged Staff Training Impact Evaluation Report”, OP Group, September 2002.

“Report of Interviews with Heads of Missions and DFAIT Subject Matter Experts”, June 2002.

“Validation of LES Accountants and Assistant Accountants Course In-Canada Program (ICP-0551)”, Tweedsmuir Group, February 26, 2002.

“Validation of LES Property and Materiel Course In-Canada Program”, Tweedsmuir Group, March 31, 2002. (Course delivery: November 27 to December 8, 2000).

“Evaluation Report (Third Level) of the In-Canada Program for LES Assistants to Program Managers and Heads of Mission”, September 27 to October 8, 1999.

Interview Notes with Heads of Mission, 2002

Interview Notes with Subject Matter Experts, 2002

LES Public Affairs Course - Asia Pacific Session Winter 2001: Level III Evaluation Results (CFSD), February, 2002.

LES Commercial Officers, email follow-up questions from CFSD re Americas-Caribbean Training Session, February 19-23, 2001 and Asia Pacific Training Session, March 12-16, 2001.