

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA

Report on Plans and Priorities for 2000-2001

**The Honourable John Manley
Minister
Western Economic Diversification Canada**

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Section I: Messages

Minister's Portfolio Message

In the global economy, innovation is an essential determinant of long-term economic growth, improved productivity and, ultimately, our quality of life. Preparing Canadians for the knowledge-based economy remains one of the government's top priorities in the years ahead. My portfolio of government organisations is promoting the growth of a strong dynamic Canadian economy and helping Canadians take advantage of the opportunities offered by the global knowledge-based economy. We have laid a solid foundation through our continuing investments in knowledge and innovation.

An essential ingredient for our knowledge-based growth, both as an economy and as a society, is Connecting Canadians, an initiative designed to make Canada the most connected country in the world. Leading-edge applications will create jobs and growth, and strengthen productivity performance. Connecting Canadians also allows us to reach out to all citizens, and redefine and enhance how we provide services to, and interact with, Canadians.

I am pleased to present the Report on Plans and Priorities for Western Economic Diversification Canada that sets out for Canadians its planned activities, priorities and resources over the course of the next three years. These plans illustrate how Western Economic Diversification Canada is contributing to the building of a strong and dynamic Canadian economy.

Western Economic Diversification Canada partners and works closely with other governments, industry and the community in building a stronger more economically vibrant Western Canada. Western Economic Diversification Canada has built a solid network of organizations that can deliver innovative pan-western programs to deal with issues that are specific to the small and medium size entrepreneur. With over one hundred points of service across western Canada, Western Economic Diversification Canada responds effectively to the needs of both urban and rural communities.

The Industry Portfolio is...

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
Business Development Bank of
Canada*
Canadian Space Agency
Competition Tribunal
Copyright Board Canada
Canada Economic Development for
Quebec Regions
Industry Canada
National Research Council Canada
Natural Sciences and Engineering
Research Council of Canada
Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada
Standards Council of Canada*
Statistics Canada
Western Economic Diversification
Canada

**Not required to submit Reports on
Plans and Priorities*

These plans illustrate Western Economic Diversification Canada's effectiveness in assessing changing economic trends, anticipating needs and opportunities, and responding to them quickly and efficiently, while simultaneously advancing the Government's overall policy agenda. With over ten years of expertise, the department understands the fundamental economic challenges facing western Canada and as a client-focused, service-driven, proactive organization, addresses these needs to build a stronger West and a stronger Canada.

As we look ahead we must define excellence by global standards. Innovation, science, research and development, and connectedness will profoundly change the world we face in the next decade. To maintain and improve our quality of life, we must be more skilled, more productive, more entrepreneurial and more innovative than any other country in the world and we can be all of these things.

The Honourable John Manley

Secretary of State's Message



I am pleased to table this Report on Plans and Priorities for Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD). WD is in business to promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy; to coordinate federal economic activities in the West; and to reflect western Canadian interests in national decision-making.

The Department's overall goal is to ensure that western Canadians have access to economic development programs, services for small and medium-size enterprises and capital to start and grow their businesses. Directly or through innovative partnerships, WD helps leverage the resources to put together large-scale initiatives whose benefits will be realized in the long term and smaller scale projects providing immediate jobs and economic viability for western enterprises.

WD is committed to providing western Canadians with economic development programs in partnership with others including municipalities, provincial governments, academic institutions, private sector groups, non-government organizations and individual Canadians.

WD's network of partnerships provides access to services critical to small business and entrepreneurial success. The Western Canada Business Service Network partnership has over 100 points of service and continues to expand through satellite offices in smaller communities, where on-line connectivity ensures users access to useful and innovative business information. In order to develop and deliver targeted business services to help western Canadian entrepreneurs, WD will continue to be the western link to a world of business resources.

The Community Futures Development Corporations will continue their work in fostering community economic development. The recent \$90 million five-year extension of support to the Community Futures Development Corporations in Western Canada will ensure that the dedicated staff in these organizations can provide services vital to the rural West. The \$17.5 million five-year renewal of the Women's Enterprise Initiative for the western provinces will provide resources to help women entrepreneurs in the West.

In the last decade, the number of self-employed Aboriginal people increased substantially with about two out of every three Aboriginal firms situated west of Ontario. In April 1999, as part of a strategy to help ensure that Aboriginal entrepreneurs have the necessary information and skills to establish and expand their businesses, the federal government launched the Aboriginal Business Development Initiative. This Initiative improves access to capital and enhances the delivery of existing business support programs to

Aboriginal entrepreneurs, in part through the Aboriginal Business Service Network, in which WD and the western Canada Business Service Centres play an important role.

One of the challenges facing Canadians as we move to a global economy is how to promote innovation in Canada. An essential determinant of long-term economic growth, innovation can be defined as the creation of ideas and the application of these ideas to create new products and services. WD has supported innovation-related activities since its inception and our aim is to help the West realize its potential as a strong innovation player within the national economy.

Productive intergovernmental relations provide a strong framework for joint federal and provincial initiatives through the Western Economic Partnership Agreements. WD played a key role in marshalling support, and provided \$5 million through the Canada/Saskatchewan Western Economic Partnership Agreement, for the Canadian Light Source synchrotron project at the University of Saskatchewan, the largest science project ever undertaken in Canada to date. All Canadians will directly benefit from this investment to expand our scientific research capabilities and enhance our knowledge base, key factors in economic growth in the twenty-first century.

As a member of the Industry Portfolio, WD is proud to be part of the solution that has created the conditions necessary for a more productive western economy. WD contributes to the federal economic agenda which focuses on improving productivity performance, helping to accelerate Canada's transition to the knowledge economy in all sectors, investing in areas of high economic, social and environmental return, and creating greater opportunities for all Canadians.

In the coming year, WD will increase its support for innovation to encourage productivity growth and ensure a strong role for western Canadians in the knowledge-based economy. The Department will continue to support and strengthen the federal government's role in western Canada. WD's proactive, effective and visible support for the West will contribute to Canada's prosperity and help forge the links that unite us.

Ron J. Duhamel
Secretary of State
Western Economic Diversification

MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION

Report on Plans and Priorities 2000-2001

I submit, for tabling in Parliament, the 2000-2001 Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) for Western Economic Diversification.

To the best of my knowledge the information:

- Accurately portrays the department's mandate, plans, priorities, strategies and expected key results of the organization.
- Is consistent with the disclosure principles contained in the *Guidelines for Preparing Report on Plans and Priorities*.
- Is comprehensive and accurate.
- Is based on sound underlying departmental information and management systems.

I am satisfied as to the quality assurance processes and procedures used for the RPP's production.

The planning and reporting structure on which this document is based has been approved by Treasury Board Ministers and is the basis for accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities provided.

Oryssia J. Lennie
Deputy Minister
Western Economic Diversification

Date: _____

Section II: Departmental Overview

A. Mandate, Roles and Responsibilities

Western Economic Diversification's (WD) mandate is defined in the Western Economic Diversification Act of 1988. The Act enables the Department to play an innovative and responsive role on behalf of the Government of Canada in providing western Canadians with policies, programs, and services that promote economic opportunities.

Through the Act, Western Economic Diversification is mandated to:

- Promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy;
- Coordinate federal economic activities in the West; and
- Reflect western Canadian interests in national decision-making.

The fundamental role for WD is to implement its regional mandate in a way that is consistent with national direction as provided in the Speech from the Throne, the Prime Minister's response to the Speech from the Throne, and the objectives of the Industry Portfolio. The department continues to implement the Jobs and Growth Agenda, while focusing on the specific priorities of the Government to achieve a higher quality of life through accelerating the transition to the knowledge-based economy. Consistent with Throne Speech direction, WD is taking an active role in building a dynamic economy, ensuring the quality of our environment, building stronger communities, creating economic opportunities for all western Canadians, and delivering on the "Connecting Canadians" agenda. Some of the department's objectives are accomplished through programs and services that focus on the small business community in western Canada. Other objectives such as improving the climate for innovation in the West, demonstrating federal leadership on western issues, and conducting policy oriented research on the western economy, are met through core program areas.

The Department's Head Office is located in Edmonton, Alberta, co-located with the Regional Office for Alberta. There are also Regional Offices located in each of the other western provinces, in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Vancouver, and a Liaison Office located in Ottawa. Regional satellite offices have also been opened in Calgary and Regina. The Department's Deputy Minister resides in Edmonton, and Assistant Deputy Ministers are in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ottawa. Each western Assistant Deputy Minister has direct responsibility for managing one of the department's corporate business lines across western Canada, and for delivery of all departmental programs in their Region. The Ottawa based Assistant Deputy Minister plays the lead role in the department's advocacy activities.

Business Line and Core Program Titles	
<i>Business Lines:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital Services Information Services Targeted Business Services Service Partnerships
<i>Core Programs:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects National Programs Legacy Programs

B. Departmental/Program Objectives

The overall objective for WD is to ensure that western Canadians are provided with economic development programs for western communities, services to small business and entrepreneurs (SMEs) directly or through innovative partnerships, capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs, help from the federal government in times of crisis, and representation of western interests in national decision making. To meet these needs the department has developed several business lines and a series of core programs, which are presented below along with their specific objectives.

Business Lines:

- **Capital Services:** Objective - Develop targeted Loan/Investment Fund Programs, offered in cooperation with private and public sector financial institutions, as well as other assistance in accessing conventional loan/equity financing. The Funds were established in response to small business' need for financing in soft-asset and new economy areas.
- **Information Services:** Objective - Increase use of information technology to provide cost-effective business information products by tailoring information to the needs of SMEs and entrepreneurs in western Canada.
- **Targeted Business Services:** Objective - Provide assistance to SMEs and entrepreneurs to develop business plans to start or expand their business, sell to international and public sector markets, and initiatives to streamline regulations which may adversely affect small business.
- **Service Partnerships:** Objective - Develop and implement innovative alternative service delivery arrangements, which meet the needs of western Canadian communities, SMEs and entrepreneurs.

Core Programs:

- **Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects:** Objective - Develop public/private partnerships, federal, provincial and tripartite economic development initiatives to help SMEs compete in the Canadian and global markets.
- **National Programs:** Objective - Deliver national economic development programs, including the Infrastructure Works Program, special community economic adjustment initiatives and relief/assistance in response to economic crisis situations or disasters.
- **Legacy Programs:** Objective - Manage the administration and recovery of repayable contributions within the terms of contribution agreements made in previous years under the Western Diversification Program (WDP), the Industrial Regional Development Program (IRDP) and the Western Transportation Industrial Development Program (WTID).

C. External Factors Influencing the Department

Intergovernmental Relations and Economic Prosperity:

Several forces are combining to make the next few years crucial ones for economic development and strengthened federal activities in western Canada. First, WD's intergovernmental relations are, by all standards, harmonious. Disputes over resource ownership like those of the 1970s and early 1980s has given way to an era of most governments working together on major problems. In most western provincial governments, public finances are in good shape. The federal and provincial governments share a common interest in a combination of strategic program investments, tax reform and reduction and debt repayment. These forces provide a strong framework for federal action, and WD is working to build on existing good intergovernmental relations to help expand the Government of Canada's networks and links to the region.

A second positive force is the region's relative prosperity over much of the last decade. While leading indicators suggest that western Canada as a region is showing stable growth over time, there are many fundamental challenges which must be faced. The future of family farming, coastal fisheries, "one industry" rural communities, global warming and environmental trade-offs in the energy industry, an under-productive forestry sector, and northern economic development each represent a fundamental economic challenge for the future of western Canada.

Such distinctive western issues require a creative and positive response from the Government of Canada. Western Canadians, long wary of boom and bust cycles, see the knowledge economy as contributing to a more secure long-term economic base in the region. Farm, forest and energy products, however still account for 69% of western Canada's exports compared to 16% for the rest of Canada. Thus, the welfare of the 9,285,000 people who live in the region remains tied to staple commodities produced on a large scale and sold on volatile world markets. Greater productivity and economic

innovation are important themes in western Canada, and must provide the impetus for effective federal economic development and diversification strategies.

Economic Outlook:

In western Canada 1999 will be remembered as a year characterized by the effects of plummeting oil prices, adverse farming conditions, weak Asian demand and sluggish global commodity prices. In 1999, western Canada as a region grew by 1.4% compared to 4.6% for the rest of Canada. In 2000, the Conference Board expects that higher commodity prices and better growing conditions will draw these growth rates closer together, with the West growing at a rate of 2.9% while the rest of Canada slows to a 3.2% growth rate.

British Columbia suffered the most from the Asian Crisis of 1997, with output declining by 0.3% in 1998 before bouncing back 1.8% in 1999. The Conference Board expects the province to gain momentum in 2000 with growth of 2.2%. Strong United States demand for lumber, natural gas and machinery did not prevent a decline in total export values in 1996 and again in 1998. Weak job growth and the loss of 18,800 people in 1998 and 4,900 people in 1999 to other provinces aggravated the situation and the emerging recovery is still hobbled by weak retail sales and housing starts. Nevertheless, strong demand in the United States and recovery in Europe and Asia is now reviving British Columbia's export sector and the Conference Board expects the province to shake off the lingering effects of the Asian flu with growth of 2.9% by 2001.

Alberta also suffered from the Asian Crisis as oil prices, in real terms, plummeted to levels not seen since before the oil shocks of the 1970s. As a result, the provincial growth rate fell from 7.5% in 1997 to 1.2% in 1998 and 0.9% in 1999. Alberta was spared a decline in output, however, because job seekers arriving from other provinces boosted local demand and new natural gas pipelines to the Chicago area boosted gas prices and drilling activity. Low oil prices did not last long. OPEC cut production by 8% and prices surged throughout 1999, improving cash flow in the oil patch and raising near-term investment intentions particularly in oil sands projects in northern Alberta. Alberta is now poised to lead the West with growth of 4.0% in 2000.

Saskatchewan growth cooled from 6.1% in 1997 to 1.3% in 1998 and 2.0% in 1999 as farm product prices declined. Despite the slow-down, Saskatchewan had the fastest growth in the West in 1999, thanks in part to a \$900 million injection from work on the Alliance pipeline from northern British Columbia to Chicago. The pipeline will be completed in the summer of 2000, but the Conference Board expects a recovery in farming, mining and oil and gas to lift Saskatchewan to growth of 2.4% in 2000. It may seem that Saskatchewan escaped the Asian Crisis unscathed, but aggregate growth statistics do not tell the whole story. Low grain prices hit the key agriculture sector and farmers could not divert sales from the weak Asian market to the United States. Net farm income from farm operations collapsed from \$1,576 million in 1996 to \$18 million in 1997, \$9 million in 1998 and a devastating loss of \$19 million in 1999.

Manitoba's central location and diverse industrial base did not protect the province from the impact of the Asian Crisis. Growth slowed from 4.6% in 1997 to 3.1% in 1998, and low grain prices and spring flooding in the southwest combined to reduce growth to 1.2% in 1999. Net farm income data shows us that farmers lost \$54 million in 1999. This loss curtailed purchases of farm machinery and stalled growth in manufacturing, despite continued strength in export-oriented sectors like transportation equipment. The Conference Board forecasts that growth will rise to 2.5% in 2000 with the return of more normal growing conditions in the province.

Post Deficit Era and Socio-Demographic Challenges:

A third positive force impacting western Canada is the coming of "post deficit" era. Governments are moving to a period where resources are more readily available to address longer-term economic challenges and important horizontal issues. In this vein, western Canadians concerns mirror those of other Canadians. They include job security, peaceful communities and a decent society that balances economic growth with social justice – all of which are reflected in the Speech from the Throne as important areas for national government action.

Social and demographic issues are also impacting on the operating environment for the department. Aboriginal populations are growing very rapidly in western Canada, as a share both of provincial populations and in terms of the total number of Canadian Aboriginal people. The number of Aboriginal Canadians in urban centres is also growing, in Winnipeg, Regina and Edmonton in particular. Governments are seeking innovative policy responses in this complex area. Western Canada is a very urbanized region, with five of every nine Westerners living in metropolitan areas. This creates several challenges and opportunities for the Government of Canada and WD. Rapid population growth in western Canadian cities generates demands for better public services and for the renewed infrastructure that is essential for the new economy; the accompanying phenomenon of rural depopulation brings calls for more help in keeping rural communities viable.

The above issues combine in matrix fashion to create the environment in which WD operates. The department consistently strives to anticipate the economic future of western Canada and act as a catalyst to ensure the region possesses the fundamental economic tools to ensure prosperity for western Canadians.

Toward a Stronger National Agenda:

In January 1999, the Prime Minister established the Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on the Four Western Provinces. A group of Liberal Members of Parliament and Senators from across Canada held consultations in each of the four western provinces, meeting with and hearing from many western Canadians.

The Task Force's findings, coupled with the need to stabilize the department's financial position in response to budget uncertainties, have led WD to undertake preliminary work to determine how the department might respond to potential new priorities over the short

to medium term. Priority considerations include the possibility of an enhanced role in responding to economic development issues and in strengthening relationships with western Canadians. WD will work to position itself to respond to the challenges and opportunities reported in the Task Force report.

D. Departmental Planned Spending

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Spending 1999-00	Planned Spending 2000-2001	Planned Spending 2001-2002	Planned Spending 2002-2003
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	195,055	191,478	149,323	130,838
Non-Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	...	...	...	...
Less: Respendable Revenues	...	...	...	...
Total Main Estimates	195,055	191,478	149,323	130,838
Adjustments **	14,740	47,200	10,200	2,700
Net Planned Spending	209,795 *	238,678	159,523	133,538
Less: Non-respendable revenue	58,270	53,000	49,000	44,000
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	3,438	3,571	3,664	3,791
Net cost of Program	154,963	189,249	114,187	93,329
Full Time Equivalents	344	344	344	344

* Reflects the best forecast of total net planned spending to the end of the fiscal year.

** Adjustments are to accommodate approvals obtained since the Annual Reference Level Update (ARLU) exercise and to include Budget initiatives.

Section III: Plans, Results and Resources

Departmental Overview

Planned Spending (\$ thousands) and Full Time Equivalents (FTE)

Forecast Spending 1999-00	Planned Spending 2000-2001	Planned Spending 2001-2002	Planned Spending 2002-2003
\$154,963 *	189,249	114,187	93,329
344	344	344	344

* Reflects the best forecast of total net planned spending to the end of the fiscal year.

Business Lines and Core Programs: Introduction

WD is mandated to promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy; to coordinate federal economic activities in the West; and to reflect western Canadian interests in national decision-making. It fulfils its mandate by focusing its programs and services on the small business community in western Canada, and by ensuring that all western Canadians have access to the information, services and capital they need to start and maintain a small business.

WD's activities are organized into seven core areas, which are: capital services, information services, targeted business services, service partnerships, strategic initiatives and special projects, national programs, and legacy programs. Detailed plans for each business line and core program area are presented in the sections that follow Table A.

Key Results Commitments and Planned Results

Table A Chart of Key Results Commitments	
To provide Western Canadians with:	Planned Results Measures:
Economic development programs for western communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development programs in partnership with: other federal partners, provincial governments, urban municipalities, communities, and strategic client groups • Economic impact of programs and partnerships
Service to small business and entrepreneurs through innovative partnerships and direct client-centred service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs created, new business opportunities found • Achievement of client service standards • Client satisfaction rates • Trend in numbers of small and medium-sized exporters • Degree of geographic coverage by an Integrated Service Delivery Network points (including Canada Business Service Centres, Community Futures Development Corporations and Women's Enterprise Centres)
Capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small business start-ups, growth rates, and longevity • Delivery efficiency • Client satisfaction rates • Utilization rates • Degree of coverage in rural areas, key growth industries and technology sectors
Help from the federal government in times of crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westerners' response to flood assistance (client satisfaction) • The normalization of activities in areas affected by disaster • Jobs created through economic restructuring
Representation of western interests in national decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New procurement opportunities afforded to western Canadian business • Reflection of western interests in Canada's international and domestic policies (environment, etc.)

Capital Services

Business Line Objective

The objective of Capital Services is to increase small business awareness of and access to higher-risk financing, with a particular focus on the following target groups: key growth industries; technology; women; SMEs in minority official language communities; and rural entrepreneurs.

Business Line Description

The needs of small business have been documented through exhaustive studies and consultations. These deliberations have confirmed that small businesses, particularly in soft asset new economy areas are not being well served by traditional financial institution. The Loan/Investment Fund program is a public/private partnership that provides patient loans and counseling services to firms in key growth areas. This initiative leverages private sector investment in higher-risk, emerging and export-oriented industries. WD funds provide loan loss reserves that are intended to maximize private sector lending to small business.

WD Loan/Investment Funds are repayable and the future repayments will be re-invested in the West. The program targets gaps in the traditional financing spectrum, and ensures a value-added role for WD by offering business planning support to applicants under the Funds. The Funds are not subsidies and are delivered on commercial terms, with lending decisions made at arms-length from WD. As such, activity under these Funds may be affected in proportion to the tightening and loosening of credit policies by financial institutions as they respond to market cycles and their own internal pressures. For example, over the past year, one of WD's financial institution partners advised that the Loan Funds do not fit their future plans and they have ceased issuing these loans. Another partner has advised that its fund is working well and fills a gap in its own lending capacity. In general, however, the result has been a significant decrease in lending over the past year from \$28 million down to an estimated \$16 million.

The priorities for the coming year include the extension of one of WD's very successful funds which is drawing to a close, and the addition of some new funds (e.g. urban micro-loans and higher-risk quasi-equity) which research has indicated would address significant market gaps. Also planned is the consolidation of WD's diverse sector based funds into one or two "technology" and "value-added" funds per financial institution to streamline and simplify the delivery to clients.

The loans provided by the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) and Women's Enterprise Initiatives (WEIs) are made from investment funds provided by WD. The investment funds are repayable to the department. Lending activity is expected to remain strong in 2000-2001 with loan forecasts for the CFDCs and WEIs remaining the same as in the previous year. The total loans granted for any year do reflect general economic circumstances in the target markets, and as such are subject to some downside risk.

Key Results Commitments and Planned Results

The Department's strategy to meet this objective includes:

- Establishing, marketing, and delivering to small business higher-risk loan/investment funds in partnership with financial institutions and other capital providers;

- Providing professional services and information to assist small business develop business plans required to access financing through WD's Loan/Investment Fund program;
- Funding CFDCs and WEIs and francophone community economic development organizations so that they can make loans and provide professional services to women, aboriginal, SMEs in minority official language communities (MOLC), and young entrepreneurs in rural and remote communities; and
- Providing general information and assistance to small business on accessing a wide variety of financing.

Key Results Commitments	Planned Results Measures
<p>Increased awareness of, and access to, capital (debt and equity) for SMEs in targeted growth sectors plus rural and women entrepreneurs and micro-businesses, leading to 2000-01 outcomes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) WD Loan Funds - 300 loans, for a total of \$22 million, plus supplementary funding of \$8 million from other sources b) CFDC Loan Funds – 2,440 loans for a total of \$54 million <p>WEI Loan Funds - 180 loans for a total of \$4 million</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client satisfaction • Take-up rates for WD, CFDC, WEI, and MOLC Loan Funds • Amount of supplementary (other) funding accessed by WD clients. • Modification of program to meet client needs.
Improved business planning by clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client satisfaction • Loan approval rates
Effective relationships with financial partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner satisfaction • Take-up rates for WD, CFDC, MOLC and WEI Loan Funds
Effective utilization of available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual versus budget
<p>Improved financial skills of WD's client service staff, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Knowledge of capital markets and financing options b) Marketing, business planning and coaching skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD client satisfaction • Proportion of client services staff trained

Information Services

Business Line Objective

The objective of Information Services is to increase access to business information by western Canadian small business by developing, promoting and delivering:

- Business information products and services tailored to the needs of western Canadian small business; and
- Strategies to broaden access to business information in the West.

Business Line Description

The Information Services Secretariat provides value-added products and services to small business and the Western Canada Business Service Network through its focus on linking the needs of small business with the delivery capacity of the Information Highway. As such, its key deliverables are on the collaborative development of customized electronic delivery systems such as the Client Information System for WD Client Service Officers, the Extranet for the Western Canada Business Service Network and the Intranet for WD staff, the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the WD Web site, and the support or introduction of a number of information products for small business.

The risks to achieving the outcomes are predominantly technical, requiring significant up-front planning with users and the management of specific projects over an extended period. In almost all projects and products, high levels of collaboration are required with both internal and external clients, a process that can present timing and resource constraints. A number of projects are carried out with the CBSC National Secretariat and other members of the Industry Portfolio, including Industry Canada and Statistics Canada.

With the exception of applications developed for WD specific use (i.e. Client Information System, Correspondence Tracking, etc.) most of the work is of an ongoing nature - updating and expanding the WD Web Site, Extranet and Intranet, and working with network partners to provide tools that help them serve clients. Achievements in previous years have led to a significant increase in the use of these systems tools, which in turn has driven the need to expand and improve the offerings.

Key Results Commitments and Planned Results

The Information Services Secretariat supports other WD core program areas and the Western Canada Business Services Network in providing relevant, timely information in an electronic format for use by small business and entrepreneurs. Information Services works with network members, WD staff and other organizations to find the most appropriate technology for electronic access to products and services by small business. Its strategy is to focus on three areas of results: provision of information through the WD Web site; development of electronic infrastructure including a Client Information System, Extranet and Intranet for network members; and development or identification and marketing of information products for network members and small business.

Key activities and projects for 2000-2001 include third generation WD web site implementation, Client Information System (CIS) Phase III – Specialized Products, and Extranet implementation.

Key Results Commitments	Planned Results Measures
Western small businesses have access to an integrated information service that provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information products, primarily interactive, tailored to their specific needs • Referrals to sources of more specialized expertise 	Trend rate of use of WCBSN information products. Small business satisfaction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of the service • Appropriateness and quality of the services used. • Introduction of a “Third Generation “ WD Web site
WCBSN members are equipped to provide high quality, consistent service to client SMEs, front line personnel understand and use the full capabilities of the information products/electronic infrastructure, through training, help desk support and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability of Network members and WD staff to deliver the full range of information products • Trend rate of use • Satisfaction among network members
An electronic infrastructure that enables all Network partners to access a collective pool of information products and tools, and provide consistent, high quality and timely service to western SMEs (with support from the IT Branch and Service Partnerships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation and continuing development of the electronic infrastructure, including a Phase 3 Client Information System (CIS), Extranet and Intranet • Trend rate of use, type of Network member, and types of products used • Benchmarked against other regional agencies electronic information offerings in terms of standards, access and use

Targeted Business Services

Business Line Objective

Develop and deliver Targeted Business Services to help western Canadian entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises start and expand their businesses, and to target domestic and foreign markets that they may not otherwise be capable of accessing.

Business Line Description

A suite of products and services that include:

- Business inquiries – providing business and related information via interactions less than thirty minutes in duration.
- Business planning – providing business diagnostic and counselling services, lasting more than thirty minutes, which can include one-on-one counselling, delivery of the First Jobs in Science and Technology Program, assisting clients in developing their business plans, and delivering seminars on financing, marketing, and business planning.

- Getting Ready to Export – providing export planning services, lasting more than thirty minutes, to clients who are considering exporting or are entering export markets, which can include one-on-one counselling, reviewing their export plans, delivering the International Trade Personnel Program, and delivering seminars on exporting.
- Selling to Government – providing selling to government services, lasting more than thirty minutes, to clients who are considering public sector markets which can include one-on-one counselling, delivering seminars on selling to government, and ensuring western Canadian participation in Major Crown Projects

Key Results Commitments and Planned Result

Key Results Commitments:	Planned Results Measures: (# of clients served)
Services to entrepreneurs and small business through innovative partnerships and client-centred service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business inquiries 28,000 • Business planning 5,100 • Getting ready to export 1,900 • Selling to government 1,000

Related activities include marketing including promotion and awareness of the department’s small business programs and services, and working with Western Canada Business Service Network, Industry Portfolio and private sector partners.

Service Partnerships

Business Line Objective

The objective of Service Partnerships is to develop and maintain innovative alternative service delivery arrangements that meet the needs of western communities and small business. WD’s Service Partnerships activities focus on strengthening and expanding the Western Canada Business Service Network. WD facilitates the organization of service delivery from the client’s perspective.

Business Line Description

WD serves its clients through over 100 offices that comprise the Western Canada Business Service Network. The network is a series of partnerships with members devoted to helping small businesses and entrepreneurs succeed, and to building communities from within. The network now offers virtually 100% geographic coverage for western Canadians. Each year, the network serves small business clients across the West and offers financing to ensure entrepreneurs in western Canada can succeed and prosper.

A potential challenge to achieving the targeted outcomes involves the challenges of working with third party service providers to ensure accountability for results. 1998-

1999 saw the implementation of a new accountability framework for CFDCs that defines core services to be provided and sets specific performance targets against which to measure results. A similar accountability framework was implemented for the Women's Enterprise Centres in 1999-2000.

Key Results Commitments, Planned Results, Related Activities and Resources

Key Results Commitments	Planned Results Measures
Business Services: Small businesses and entrepreneurs have ready access to services to business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of points of service in WCBSN that serve entrepreneurs. • Total number of services provided/total number of clients served by WCBSN members.
Small businesses consistently receive high-quality service from Network partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client satisfaction level. • Service standards established.
Visibility: Small businesses recognize Network partners as a leading source of services to small business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness survey. • Total number of promotional events held by WCBSN members.
Community Economic Development: Communities have access to community economic development services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of community economic development projects/initiatives led by WCBSN members. • Total number of volunteers/volunteer hours.
Corporate Support of Network: Efficient and effective management of service partnerships, including coordination of Network partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction level of Network partners. • Percentage of available funding committed/disbursed. • Program administrative costs as a percentage of total program costs • Degree to which streamlining of administrative systems improves cooperative or alternative service delivery.
WCBSN shared vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of support among Network partners of a common vision.
WCBSC investment fund strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of redistribution of existing investment funds. • Total number of leveraging arrangements between partners and conventional lenders. • Amount of new investment funding provided to partners.

Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects

Core Program Objectives

The objective of the Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects area is to develop and launch economic development programs and initiatives for western Canada using partnerships, networks and consortia that involve industry, all orders of government, academic institutions, and research institutions. The programs and initiatives are designed to improve the overall competitiveness and productivity of western Canada through adding to the department's fundamental understanding of the western Canadian economy, building on the innovation capability of the region, and demonstrating federal leadership on regional issues.

Core Program Description

WD's primary mandate is to promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy and coordinate federal economic activities in the region. To do so, the department requires a detailed understanding of the economic issues and pressure points facing the economy. In 2000-2001, WD will be launching a number of research projects aimed at enhancing the departments understanding of the fundamental economic issues facing the region.

Work under this program area will also be devoted to building the innovation capability of the region. Creating an economic climate that is conducive to innovation, and encouraging innovation at the firm level, are basic objectives of the Industry Portfolio partners. In 2000-2001, WD will be working to implement a special series of programs and initiatives that are designed to deliver on the federal commitment to innovation in western Canada.

And, by working with other governments, WD will demonstrate federal leadership on western issues. As economic development is a shared jurisdictional responsibility and a goal of all orders of government, the department enters into Western Economic Partnership Agreements (WEPAs) and Urban Development Agreements with provincial and municipal governments in order to harmonize regional economic development efforts.

Western Economic Partnership Agreements are cost-shared federal provincial agreements that focus on the enhancement of competitiveness and productivity to develop and support a more sustainable economic base. Each agreement is consistent with both national economic policies and the unique needs and opportunities of each of the western provinces. Through joint federal provincial planning and decision-making, the agreements ensure that overlap and duplication are reduced to a minimum.

In 2000-2001, WD will continue to support Western Economic Partnership Agreements, Urban Development Agreements and new arrangements that support federal/provincial cooperation and an expanded economic base throughout the West.

In 1999-2000, WEPA agreements were in place in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The five-year agreements are creating new employment opportunities and are enhancing economic growth in strategic areas of mutual interest. Over three quarters of the funds available in each \$40 million agreement have been allocated. Each agreement is required to undergo a full program evaluation, which will provide information on the degree to which they are being met. It is expected that during 2000–2001, all remaining uncommitted funds within each agreement will be fully committed. It is anticipated that an agreement will be concluded with the Province of British Columbia in the near future.

WD also enters into tripartite urban development agreements to coordinate common efforts of federal, provincial and municipal governments. The agreements focus on addressing key challenges facing the largest cities in the West and, in particular, on ensuring the full participation of specific target groups in the economies of those cities. WD is currently a party to three formal urban development agreements in western Canada – one in Winnipeg, one in Edmonton, and one in Vancouver. Each tripartite agreement uses a variety of methods to address economic priorities in urban centres. In 2000–2001, WD plans to enter into similar arrangements with other cities in western Canada. A significant challenge to these initiatives is the availability and level of funding available from all partners.

Key Results Commitments and Planned Results

Key Results Commitments	Planned Results Measures
Good relationships with provinces, other federal departments, industry organizations, and other partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner satisfaction.
Improving the department’s knowledge of the western Canadian economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount, and quality, of research generated, programs implemented as a result of the research.
Maintaining a process for initiating, developing, implementing and tracking strategic initiatives and special projects that improve the innovation climate in western Canada, including setting broad strategic directions for the department’s innovation activities and other special initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies designed and implemented and strategic directions established.
Negotiation and finalization of federal provincial economic development agreements, and urban development agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of agreements implemented, and economic achievements of agreements.

National Programs

Core Program Objective

The objective of national programs is to:

- Create employment and renew community infrastructure through the tripartite Infrastructure Works Program; and
- Mitigate the economic impact on communities affected by federal facility closures or reductions, including military base closures, by natural disasters or by changes in federal policies and programs.

Core Program Description

Paramount among the national programs delivered by WD is the Canada Infrastructure Works Program. Since its inception, this program has created more than 35,000 jobs for western Canadians to meet the objectives set out in the table below. Over 5,000 infrastructure works projects have been approved in western Canada. All of the \$635 million funding available under the program has been committed. Activity over the coming year will continue to focus on monitoring projects and paying claims.

The government has allocated \$2.65B for strengthening provincial and municipal infrastructure and will be consulting with other orders of government in the coming months to reach consensus on a multi-year plan to improve municipal infrastructure in cities and rural communities across Canada and provincial highways. Agreements are expected to be signed by the end of the year.

National Programs also involves a variety of important economic adjustment initiatives. In past years, the department has worked with interest groups in Churchill, Manitoba to put the community on the road to a sustainable economic future. In Saskatchewan, WD has worked with the community of Moose Jaw to help the community adjust to reallocations in the Department of National Defence budget. During 2000-2001, the department will continue to work with the community of Pinawa, Manitoba to assist in its readjustment following the planned closure of Atomic Energy of Canada's nuclear laboratory in Pinawa in 2001. About 330 staff will remain at the lab, just west of Pinawa, for the next three years until the first phase of decommissioning work is completed. And in British Columbia WD is helping coastal fishing communities with economic adjustment. The program is also instrumental in helping areas cope with natural disasters, such as the Manitoba flood in 1997.

WD's advocacy activity is also an important part of the national program area. Through advocacy, WD works to ensure that national policies take into account the needs of western Canadians. This is demonstrated in part in the area of federal procurement, where WD works to ensure western firms have opportunities to bid upon and secure national procurement contracts.

Key Results Commitments and Planned Results

The strategy behind national programs is to deliver programs that sustain economic growth and jobs, and contribute to the stability of communities in western Canada as demonstrated by the outcomes and key measures presented in the following table.

Key Results Commitments	Planned Results Measures
Job creation and infrastructure renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs created • Total leveraged expenditures on infrastructure
Economic adjustment in communities affected by the closure/reduction of federal facilities (such as base closures or the commercialization of the Whiteshell laboratory), changes in federal policies (such as the revitalization of the Pacific salmon fishery) and natural disasters (such as the Red River Valley flood)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic impacts of WD sponsored initiatives, including jobs created/maintained • Preservation of key core community infrastructure such as hospitals, community centres and airport facilities • Satisfaction of stakeholders/partner organizations
Efficient delivery of national programs resulting in timely project or agreement approvals and amendments as well as compliance to the terms and conditions of the agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative overhead cost as a percentage of total program cost • Cycle time to approve projects • Client/partner/stakeholder satisfaction
Full commitment/disbursement of available program funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total funding committed/disbursed
Leveraged federal funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total funds leveraged

Legacy Programs

Business Line Objective

The objective of the Legacy Program activity area is to maximize cash collections flow from repayable contributions and to ensure that remaining commitments are paid out in accordance with the terms of agreements approved under the Western Diversification Program and other programs while ensuring growth in client firms.

Business Line Description

From 1987 to 1995, WD delivered the Western Diversification Program to businesses in western Canada. The program offered repayable contributions (a first for government programming) to firms that were developing new products, new markets, new technologies, or replacing imports.

A key performance measure, as noted below, is the value of contributions repaid. In administering its collection activities, the department takes an approach that involves

working with businesses to adapt repayment plans to business fluctuations, and ensuring, within good business practices, that businesses are given every chance to survive and contribute to economic growth. The downside risk to achieving the performance measure is the overall economic health of the business community, and the individual financial circumstances of client firms.

Key Results Commitments and Planned Results

The strategy and key activities of Legacy Programs involve working with client firms to ensure repayments are made promptly where it is within the capacity of the firm to repay, accurately forecasting the revenues to be received from client firms. The outcomes and measures associated with these activities are presented in the following table.

Key Results Commitments	Planned Results Measures
Repayable contributions repaid promptly within client firms capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect \$20 million in repayable contributions • Economic impacts of project amendments (reprofiling of repayments) • Client satisfaction
Accurate and timely revenue and expenditure forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness and reliability of monthly cash flow up-dates • Actual net cash flow compared to forecast net cash flow • Effective project monitoring activity
Achieve lower collection costs for repayable contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O&M costs as a % of repayable contributions • Streamlining of process / cycle time to approve amendments

Section IV: Horizontal Initiatives

Sustainable Development:

WD has recently updated the action plan originally published in its three year Sustainable Development Strategy published in December of 1997 (<http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/content/press/index.html>). The next three-year strategy is under development as well, and will continue to reflect a sustainable development decision-making approach.

WD partners with other federal departments, provincial governments, industry associations, institutes and various other stakeholders, whenever possible. Those organizations may have mandates that focus on social and environmental aspects, while WD and others concentrate on economic considerations. A collaborative approach fosters decisions that naturally incorporate social, environmental and economic impacts into the process.

WD, rather than having an 'SD program', integrates a balanced (economic, environmental, and social) decision-making process as a routine way of doing business. Accordingly, many of the department's activities contribute to sustainable development in the West. Examples from the past that will reflect many similar activities through to March 2001 include: loan funds that promote commercialization of environmental technologies; assistance for environmental workshops and conferences; and providing assistance for industries in crisis, for instance the west coast fishery.

Goals and Objectives	WD Revised SD Strategy Action Plan to December 2000
Raising Awareness & Providing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve SMEs access to SD information via WCBSN and create awareness of SD principles among its members • Make SD information widely available in western Canada through Internet • Provide small business with information on SD business opportunities
Supporting Sustainable Development through cooperative action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate with provincial governments on SD • Encourage cooperative action between the 3 levels of government in western Canada to promote SD • Promote achievement of federal SD objectives to support entrepreneurship and increase economic development • Expand market opportunities through joint action for environmental and related enabling technologies
Fostering a Sustainable Development culture at WD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure WD staff have understanding of Sustainable Development issues • Ensure SD is reflected in policy, plans and program development • Work to improve the environmental efficiency of office operations
Enhancing federal visibility on the climate change file and delivering programs or services that contribute to the national climate change agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position the department as a key player on the climate change file

Section V: Financial Information

Table 5.1	Summaries of Transfer Payments
Table 5.2	Source of Non-respendable Revenue
Table 5.3	Net Cost of Program for the Estimates Year

TABLE 5.1: Summary of Transfer Payments

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Spending 1999-2000	Planned Spending 2000-2001	Planned Spending 2001-2002	Planned Spending 2002-2003
GRANTS				
Grants for the Western Diversification Program	...	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total Grants	...	5,000	5,000	5,000
CONTRIBUTIONS				
Western Diversification Program	114,998	159,026	88,551	60,976
Canada Infrastructure Works Program	26,356	7,786	...	...
Loan Fund Program	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
(S) Liabilities under the <i>Small Business Loans Act</i>	21,000	18,000	13,000	7,000
(S) Liabilities under the <i>Canada Small Business Financing Act</i>	...	2,000	8,000	16,000
Total Contributions	167,354	192,812	115,551	89,976
Total Transfer Payments	167,354	197,812	120,551	94,976

(S) Statutory Vote

TABLE 5.2: Source of Non-respendable Revenue

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Revenue 1999-2000	Planned Revenue 2000-2001	Planned Revenue 2001-2002	Planned Revenue 2002-2003
Repayment of repayable contributions	26,000	19,000	14,000	7,000
Adjustment to previous years payables at year-end	1,000	1,000	...	...
Service fees under the <i>Small Business Loans Act</i>	20,000	17,000	12,000	8,000
Service fees under the <i>Canada Small Business Financing Act</i>	10,000	15,000	22,000	28,000
Other Revenue	1,270	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Non-respendable Revenue	58,270	53,000	49,000	44,000

TABLE 5.3: Net Cost of Program for the Estimates Year

(\$ thousands)	Total
Net Planned Spending	238,678
<i>Plus: Services Received without Charge</i>	
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC)	2,385
Contributions covering employees' share of employees' insurance premiums and expenditures paid by TBS	1,174
Workman's compensation coverage provided by Human Resources Canada	12
	3,571
Less: Non-respendable Revenues	53,000
2000-2001 Net Program Cost	189,249

Section VI: Other Information

References

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WD Web Site

<http://www.wd.gc.ca/> (English)

<http://www.deo.gc.ca/> (Français)

WD's Report on Plans and Priorities is available electronically at the following addresses:

<http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/content/press/reports/rpp2000.pdf> (English)

<http://www.wd.gc.ca/fra/content/press/reports/rpp2000.pdf> (Français)

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