



Global Affairs  
Canada

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# DO YOU KNOW FINANCES AT GAC?



Canada

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## Welcome to Global Affairs Canada!

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) manages Canada's diplomatic and consular missions and services abroad to enable the Government of Canada to effectively serve Canadians and advance our country's interests worldwide.

The Corporate Planning, Finance and Information Technology branch has a dedicated team of talented, skilled and sought-after finance professionals working together within various bureaus to provide efficient financial services and advice to our clients and partners. We promote a healthy, inclusive and diverse workplace where respect, collaboration, ethical conduct and innovation are part of our organizational culture. We hold ourselves to the highest standards of behaviour toward others.

We aim to become a leader in financial operations within the federal government and the best place in which to work!

Ready to join us? Here's a glimpse of what we do.

## What we do specifically in GAC's Corporate Planning, Finance and Information Technology branch

### Financial policy and Financial community development

This team is responsible for financial policy and financial community development as part of the Financial Operations bureau.

Its mandate's **financial policies** component is to provide strategic advice, guidance and interpretation on financial policies and directives, some of which are unique and specific to GAC given the international context. This team's main activities are to:

- review, develop and publish policy instruments/intranet pages based on the Financial Policy work plan, as well as changes to Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) policy instruments and priorities
- review various requests requiring approval from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), deputy ministers or ministers

The team also has a **financial community development** component whose mandate is to support the implementation of an integrated talent management strategy. The 4 pillars of its financial community development strategy are recruiting, training, retaining and managing talent through the development and dissemination of tools and processes. The activities include:

- developing communication/outreach tools to promote talent management within the financial community
- coordinating the Financial Officer Recruitment and Development Program
- liaising with the Office of the Comptroller General and Association of Canadian Financial Officers, as well as internally with all bureaus

### Banking operations, domestic and international

GAC manages Canada's diplomatic and consular missions and services abroad to enable the Government of Canada to effectively serve Canadians and advance our country's interests worldwide. The Banking Services, Domestic and International division plays an important role in supporting the department's operations and mandate.

The Receiver General (RG) for Canada authorized GAC to create, manage and maintain an international banking platform. As a result, GAC now manages approximately 220 local bank accounts across 127 missions in over 90 currencies.

In addition to setting up local bank accounts for missions abroad, the authority delegated from the RG includes issuing payments abroad in various currencies and collecting revenue on behalf of the Government of Canada. These banking operations are mainly exercised through providing banking and cash management advice and assistance to missions abroad, including but not limited to the following banking activities:

- managing the opening and closing of bank accounts abroad
- managing fund transfers to missions and returns of excess funds to Headquarters (HQ)
- setting-up banking arrangements with banks
- managing online banking and payment platforms, including the Mission Online Payment System and the Standard Payment System
- managing GAC's acquisition credit cards program

## Financial operations, international

This team is the functional leader for international financial operations and ensures the proper implementation, standardization and compliance of financial policies and procedures in 7 common service delivery points (CSDPs) located in Berlin, Brussels, London, Manila, Mexico, New Delhi and Washington, D.C. Each CSDP is responsible for delivering finance, procurement and human resources services to 170 embassies.

With its expertise in financial operations, the team provides sound advice and guidance to managers with financial delegation in Canadian embassies abroad.

The team is also responsible for preparing and delivering training and development programs to various GAC employees who are preparing for a posting abroad as well as those already at post.

Finally, the team works on various innovative projects using new technologies to optimize financial data, making it readily available for sound financial planning, management and decision making. We are recognized for our excellent customer service, our ability to quickly find pragmatic solutions to complex international challenges and our close collaboration with the various partners within GAC.

## Digital finance

The Digital finance team operates in 3 main business streams to:

- **provide modern digital-first services**
  - leads digital process transformation or improvement initiatives to optimize end-to-end operational processes, data quality, and services to clients
  - enables reallocation of resources to higher-value activities via robotics process automation (RPA)
- **augment advanced analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities**
  - develops advanced analytics and AI capabilities
  - improves insights on financial data to support more intelligent data-driven, risk-based, forward-looking operations and advice to support client needs (e.g. chatbots)
- **modernize GAC's financial management solutions**
  - helps define and enable the finance vision and a future financial management service delivery model via standardized, improved and integrated processes, systems and data
  - improves the user experience for GAC's financial planning and in-year forecasting planning tools
  - is responsible for ongoing corporate services functions such as strategic advice, maintenance, support (e.g. client helpdesk) and training for GAC's integrated financial planning solution (SAP BW Integrated Planning);

RPA solutions (26 processes in production); and data science solutions including advanced analytics and AI solutions

For more information, contact: [rpa.gac-amc@international.gc.ca](mailto:rpa.gac-amc@international.gc.ca)

## Grants and Contributions Management Bureau

The Grants and Contributions Management Bureau includes 5 units.

### Grants & contributions financial advisory services

The talented, skilled, dedicated, and sought-after financial advisors on the Grants & contributions financial advisory services team are valued business partners of GAC's program clients.

They support:

- delivery of GAC's Grants and Contributions (Gs&Cs) transfer payment programs by providing expert financial advice and support to the CFO on Gs&Cs funding decisions
- program clients in the management of Gs&Cs along project life cycles by providing skilled assessments of financial proposals, financial policy interpretation, and strategic collaboration with stakeholders

Join this team

- to be part of a dynamic and engaged team dedicated to providing valued financial advice and support to programs in the financial management of Gs&Cs
- to develop strategic partnerships within GAC and with external stakeholders
- to be part of GAC's Gs&Cs transformation initiative and contribute to the reshaping of business processes and practices
- to develop data-driven analysis capabilities by collaborating with colleagues department-wide
- to lead budget negotiations with Canadian NGOs, international organizations, multilateral agencies (WHO, World Bank, UN agencies)
- to transform profession into passion

### Fraud management

The Grants and Contributions Fraud Management Unit is involved from the time an alleged fraud is reported or discovered by GAC until the case is closed.

The team

- manages allegations of loss of public funds/Crown assets related to Gs&Cs
- continuously improve the Gs&Cs Fraud Protocol and Management Framework
- raises awareness across GAC of Gs&Cs fraud issues
- develops and delivers corporate Gs&Cs fraud prevention and detection training
- plays an important role with GAC Gs&Cs programs in the resolution of fraud incidents linked to Gs&Cs
- advises programs on fraud-related risks and conducts technical reviews of the investigation reports on fraud allegations
- develops action plans and communication strategies tailored to the facts from fraud investigation
- validates the fraudulent amounts identified by the investigation and proposes a reimbursement or recovery method

## Financial compliance

The mandate of the Financial Compliance Unit is to provide GAC with assurance that funds disbursed to organizations are used for their intended purposes and in accordance with the terms and conditions of their signed agreements. The team carries out this mandate by conducting audits and financial capacity building activities (FCBAs) with recipients. These activities are mainly performed by accounting firms.

### Financial Compliance Unit

- manages financial compliance audits of recipient organizations according to an annual risk-based audit plan, as per the Treasury Board Policy on Transfer Payments
- reviews the results of recipient audits in collaboration with programs
- plans, coordinates and performs FCBAs with recipient organizations at the outset of agreements
- provides technical advice on financial compliance to programs and senior management
- conducts training activities to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders

## Financial risk assessment

The Financial Risk Assessment Unit serves clients that include GAC's programs and senior management.

Its mandate is to perform financial risk assessments of organizations considered for new funding from GAC and monitor the financial situation of organizations with active agreements. The assessment is based on an analysis of the organization's financial statements and a review of the organization's active and proposed projects with GAC to determine the organization's financial health and financial management capacity. The analysis also considers other factors such as compliance audit adjustments and the size of the organization in relation to the agreement value. This unit uses the assessment to provide financial advice and recommendations on ways to mitigate the financial risks identified. If the financial situation deteriorates, this team will do an in-depth analysis of the organization to understand the situation and provide suggestions for improvements.

## Fiduciary risk and practices development

The Fiduciary Risk and Practices Development Unit is responsible for establishing fiduciary risk management policies and processes for Gs&Cs across GAC. The team plays a key role in promoting innovative risk-based approaches and providing advice, tools and training for fiduciary risk management for a wide range of initiatives.

As part of GAC's Gs&Cs transformation initiative, the team is now co-developing a new risk management component for all of GAC's Gs&Cs.

This ambitious initiative involves

- extensive consultation with stakeholders and change management
- redesign of business processes
- engagement with IT
- development of reference materials and training

## Special investigations

The Special Investigations division is a small team that investigates allegations of fraud and other financial improprieties at GAC. Since most of our administrative investigations have both on-site and off-site components, our files can bring us anywhere where GAC has an office, including Canadian missions worldwide. After the team receives an allegation, we

complete an admissibility review and perform preliminary fact-finding activities to assess the situation and determine if an investigation is warranted.

During an investigation, the team performs a number of functions including

- analyzing reports
- reviewing documentation
- interviewing witnesses
- assessing internal controls
- drafting reports

The investigations not only allow us to determine whether allegations are founded, they represent an opportunity for us to improve internal processes and address vulnerabilities.

The team also provides functional guidance to management on preventing and detecting fraud and strengthening internal controls.

## What we do similar to other departments

### Corporate Accounting

The Corporate Accounting team's major ongoing responsibilities include:

- compiling and submitting the monthly trial balances and the final trial balance, including determining year-end accruals and allowances such as payable leave
- compiling and submitting the 3-volume Public Accounts, which represent approximately 50 individual plates
- preparing GAC's financial statements, including the financial statement discussion and analysis
- presenting the financial statements and financial statement discussion and analysis to our director general and GAC's CFO for approval
- preparing the quarterly financial reports (Q1 to Q3) and the future-oriented financial statements for budgeting and planning purposes
- preparing quarterly contingent liability reports, which summarize losses incurred by GAC, claims against the Crown, ex-gratia payments and court awards
- providing responses to parliamentary questions and Access to Information and Privacy requests that require research involving specific documents and consultations with many other GAC teams

The team's responsibilities were recently expanded and now we assess and document the accuracy and appropriateness of complex financial transactions (e.g. unconditionally repayable contributions) to ensure compliance with public sector accounting standards.

### Corporate financial systems

The Corporate Financial Systems division comprises 3 teams, each responsible for SAP modules and transformation projects.

Their mandate is to design and provide integrated digital solutions and support to enable GAC financial and material management operations by leading innovation and establishing strategic partnerships inside and outside of the department.



Key activities include:

- design, develop and provide an integrated digital solution and client support to enable departments' business functions such as the management of finance, material, human resources (HR), procurement, grants and contributions and assets.
- establish and implement a controls framework and monitoring processes for departmental ERP systems
- develop a strategy for the transformation of GAC's financial management system
- lead innovation by providing advice and tools to enable the business efficiency and transformation of GAC's operations
- represent GAC in various interdepartmental committees and initiatives to establish strategic partnerships that align with Government of Canada directions and embrace industry best practices

## Domestic financial operations

This team is responsible for:

- delivering domestic operations using a risk-based approach
- processing a range of financial transactions (e.g. accounts payable and receivable, interdepartmental settlements, national travel and relocation, payroll, claims from Phoenix)
- leveraging digital technologies and best practices that are focused on clients
- coordinating supporting exercises such as the production of public accounts, responses to parliamentary and media questions, ATIP requests, and requests from the offices of the minister/deputy ministers while collaborating with various stakeholders

## Internal controls

GAC's internal control team is responsible for the following activities:

- conducts ongoing assessments at HQ and at missions abroad to ensure that GAC's system of internal controls over financial management is in place and effective
- ensures financial resources are well managed, reporting is reliable, and transparency and accountability are maintained in the use of public funds

The team supports the CFO in discharging their responsibilities and provides subject matter expertise to identify key financial controls, assess the effectiveness of the controls and provide assessment reports.

This involves ongoing monitoring of financial controls on a yearly basis using a risk-based approach by conducting:

- risk assessment of the key business processes and systems
- updates of control documentation on financial processes
- tests to assess the effectiveness of financial management controls at HQ
- on-site control testing for mission-specific processes abroad
- reporting on results and following up on the correction of control weaknesses

Join us for the opportunity to work on a range of GAC's financial processes and expand your expertise in internal controls.

## Internal audit

The Office of the Chief Audit Executive at GAC is a dynamic results-driven team of professionals. The work environment is often fast-paced, and the focus is on providing deputy heads with assurance about the design and operation of GAC's governance, risk management, and control processes. We conduct audit and advisory engagements on GAC's business



lines of trade, international assistance, and foreign policy as well as Canadian embassies and corporate services. Over the years, auditors gain in-depth experience across the international horizon based on a variety of subjects and multiple projects. This work takes us to Canadian embassies around the world especially to those operating in high-risk environments.

We generously support professional development opportunities to enhance technical expertise, soft skills, and certifications of auditors.

We encourage auditors to build relationships across GAC as well as in the internal audit community to advocate for the value of the profession.

We prefer to hire auditors from a variety of academic backgrounds and various professional experiences, especially those with expertise in finance, data analytics and statistics.

GAC is committed to advancing equity and embracing diversity and inclusion by implementing meaningful actions that are founded on respect, collaboration and accountability. Come and join our diverse and inclusive team!

## Planning and resource management

The Planning and Resource Management division plays a key role in managing GAC's budgets. It comprises 4 units whose primary responsibilities include preparing

- internal reports to inform senior management of GAC's financial situation to optimize decision making
- external reports required by the Treasury Board Secretariat to confirm opening departmental authorities and new funding to be received during the fiscal year
- various strategic analyses required for sound resource management

## Budgeting and Reporting (Operating and Capital) and Financial Coding and Salary Forecasting (Gs&Cs)

Both units are mainly responsible for:

- producing GAC's financial update (FINSTAT) for presentation to the Financial and Operations Management Committee and the Executive Committee
- managing the Departmental Management Reserve
- conducting GAC's financial analysis on various matters
- providing advice, guidance and solutions to clients and senior management regarding salary management and financial forecasting as a whole

## Grants and Contributions

This unit supports the management of the International Assistance Envelope, including the Development portfolio, which includes leading the annual Investment Plan process, responding to additional internal governance and central agency reporting requirements, managing the batching of projects for advancements, and overseeing international commitments and targets to support GAC's priorities.

Joining these teams is an essential first step in the path from FI to CFO:

- gain a unique overall perspective of GAC, its resources and operations abroad
- get informed and involved in GAC's overarching financial strategy
- develop critical core competency in risk management, collaboration, negotiation, facilitation, and leadership

## Financial Planning and Reporting

The Financial Planning and Reporting Unit is responsible for providing

- external financial reports such as Main Estimates and Supplementary Estimates
- Annual Reference Level Update (ARLU)
- financial tables to be included in the Departmental Plan and the Report on Plans and Priorities

- some plates for the Public Accounts of Canada
- analyses and financial reports (CFO Survey, year-end reports to Treasury Board Secretariat, quarterly financial reports)
- advice and guidance to clients on various issues related to budget allocation, controls and structure

This unit is involved in all stages of the Government of Canada's financial cycle that take place throughout the financial year, including:

- maintenance of GAC's reference levels at the bureau level
- initial budget allocation and supplementary budgets in the system including the management of the coding lines for the budgets and expenditures in the financial system

## Financial Strategies

The Financial Strategies Unit is responsible for:

- developing strategies for situations such as a departmental review of expenditures relative to organizational priorities with the objective of reallocating resources to achieve better alignment
- preparing financial strategies to reflect budget reductions in branch reference levels imposed on GAC

The team is now focused on advancing key elements of the Financial Sustainability Strategy, which includes a department-wide review of service fees falling within its mandate.

This team also implements the Finstat Modernization initiative undertaken in 2021-22 to support the deployment of a modernized financial management framework to standardize financial management.

The modernized financial management framework supports GAC's financial management needs and includes:

- updated budget management and forecasting policies/directives, processes
- key performance indicators
- standard guidance and training
- modernized FINSTAT planning tools, reports and analytic solutions

## CFO attestation and Treasury Board Secretariat liaison

The TBS liaison team supports the implementation and delivery of programs and services across GAC. As a departmental resource focused on Treasury Board submissions, CFO attestations, and cabinet business, the team provides advice, guidance, and recommendations on complex and /or sensitive files to senior management, clients and stakeholders.

We manage a wide range of projects, encompassing many issues and complexities in multi-stakeholder project and program teams. We provide strategic recommendations to senior management on the development and implementation of strategies and proposals to support GAC priorities and clients' needs when seeking authorities from TB.

Regular activities include :

- providing advice and guidance
- identifying and recommending solutions
- providing briefings and recommendations to deal with complex / high profile issues related to GAC spending plans, priority setting, and programs

The team

- writes briefing notes and presentations, conducts research, prepares reports or papers for management or partner/stakeholder organizations
- provides recommendations for CFO attestation as part of supporting documentation for TB submissions and Memoranda to Cabinet

We work closely with all areas within GAC, with TBS or other central agencies, and with OGDs. Team members represent the CFO branch in internal and external multi-stakeholder consultations or in formal departmental, interdepartmental and agency committees.

## Financial Management Advisory Services

This team comprises 2 divisions, SWA and SWC, both of which provide exemplary financial management consulting services and strategic financial advice. Their shared responsibilities involve budget planning, forecasting, financial analysis and monitoring for all financial authorities (e.g. operating, including salaries, capital and Gs&Cs). The team also provides costing support for Cabinet documents, such as Memoranda to Cabinet, Treasury Board submissions as well as Federal Budget proposals for a wide clientele.

The 2 divisions share these financial management operations and advisory services according to the needs of their respective clients.

SWA's client portfolio focuses on Gs&Cs programs (bilateral/multilateral initiatives), such as Global Issues and Development, Partnerships for Development Innovation and International Security and Political Affairs, as well as geographic desks (e.g. Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa, Americas and Asia Pacific).

SWC's client portfolio focuses on Corporate Planning, Finance and Information Technology, Human Resources, Consular, Security and Emergency Management, Legal Affairs, International Platform, International Business Development, Trade Agreements and Negotiations, and Public Affairs.

SWC's client portfolio also involves a number of Gs&Cs programs related to Canadian Export and Trade Commissioner Services, management and issuance of export/imports permits and as well as contribution payments associated with Canada's membership in a number of international organizations.