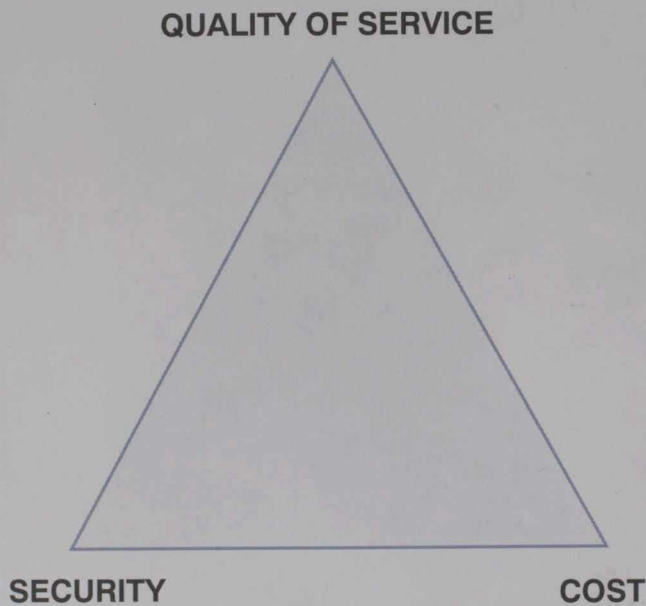




The Challenge

To achieve the performance targets of the Passport Office, and to deliver an effective product at an acceptable level of service calls for the constant balancing of the variables of security, service and cost.



Service to the public is one of the prime reasons the Office was designated a Special Operating Agency. The ability to provide good service depends on the Passport Office's most valuable asset – the employee. Of particular significance are the Passport Office examiners who deal with the public on a day-to-day basis. They personify the competence, care, professionalism and accuracy of service of the Passport Office.

Other matters of importance to the public in evaluating the service they receive are the location of the issuing office and the speed with which the passport is made available.

The strength of the Canadian passport lies in its international reputation for integrity, and in the security of both the issuing process and the passport booklet itself. Current high standards must be maintained, and technological developments herald an even more secure document in the future.

In 1991, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, Secretary of State for External Affairs, directed the Office to conduct an internal review of security measures which resulted in the development of a Security Enhancement Plan (SEP). The first stages undertaken involve further guarantor verification, co-operation with other investigative bodies, more emphasis on applicants appearing in person, and retention of evidence of citizenship during the processing of passport applications.

Cost is an important consideration, but must not outweigh the requirements of service and security. Under a revolving fund, the Passport Office finances its operations fully from revenues earned. With the designation of the Passport Office as an SOA, it was determined that the period wherein the revolving fund would generate revenues sufficient to meet expenditures was to remain four years. Therefore, the Passport Office is required to "break even" at the end of the fiscal year 1993-94. The revolving fund may accumulate surpluses or deficits up to a maximum of \$4 million per year, and is authorized to carry over surplus revenue from year to year to offset future shortfalls.

Under a fee structure recommended by the Treasury Board for approval by the Governor in Council, fees are, in principle, established for a four-year period. Since travel documents are the only source of revenue, fees must be determined very carefully, based on the Office's long-term predictions of future demand for passport services. To determine demand, the Passport Office relies primarily on forecasts of international passenger traffic prepared by Transport Canada which take into account such factors as demographic data, immigration trends, the international political situation, the economy, personal disposable income per capita, the strength of the Canadian dollar and air fares.

Each fiscal year, the Office establishes productivity targets for the agency as a whole, for each regional operation and for each issuing office, as a method of controlling the cost of service delivery.

The productivity rate is defined as the number of travel documents issued per person-year.