

The call for special passports for Canadian Armed Forces personnel serving in the Gulf increased dramatically. While this demand was counter-balanced to a degree by the cancellation of travel plans by government officials, special and diplomatic passport issues increased by 44% over the previous year — from 7,106 in 1989-90 to 10,240 in 1990-91.

When the Gulf War began, the Passport Office tightened its security measures. Guards were assigned to the waiting rooms of each regional office. In some locations, where a Passport Office shares a multi-level building with other tenants, an elevator was dedicated to Passport Office visitors and staff. One office received a bomb threat and another was required to close early due to the threat of a demonstration. Otherwise, business was conducted as usual.

Historically, Canadians travelling to the United States (U.S.A.) have required proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate, and photo identification, such as a driver's licence. After the Gulf War began, the United States Federal Aviation Administration (F.A.A.) initially indicated that a passport was required to travel to the U.S.A. This statement was later corrected. Nevertheless, Canadians applied for passports in unprecedented numbers, either directly as a result of hearing the initial F.A.A. requirement, indirectly by hearsay or later, realizing the value of the passport.

During February, the volume of passports issued in Canada increased by 38.7% over the previous year. Additional training courses were held for regional and Headquarters staff to meet this significant increase. To reduce pressure in the busiest offices in the Eastern and Western Operations and provide assistance while the training was completed, experienced staff were sent on temporary assignment both from Headquarters and from the larger regional offices. In Eastern Operations, to assist smaller offices in coping with the sudden demand, passport files were sent to Montréal for processing and completed passports were returned to the originating

office within three working days. The Québec City office required additional temporary public counter space to accommodate the increase. The volume of applications submitted through Members of Parliament increased by 172% in February over the monthly average.

At the onset, a contingency plan was developed to ensure passport demand would not exceed supply. Arrangements with suppliers and Supply and Services Canada were negotiated to ensure additional materials and forms would be available. Existing stock was closely monitored across Canada and prompt delivery of supplies supported the additional requirements for passports in the last months of the fiscal year.

At the beginning of March, passport demand abated. The Eastern and Western Operations had borne the greatest impact. Despite the sudden increase in volume, the Passport Office maintained its service commitment of issuing passports within 3-5 working days and within 2 weeks of receipt by mail.

VOLUME AND PRODUCTIVITY ANALYSIS

Volume

The Passport Office, including missions, issued 1,269,307 passports in 1990-91. This was an increase of 6.2% over the previous fiscal year and 2.0% over the predicted volume at the Third Quarter Review, which was based on Transport Canada's passenger forecasts for international flights (excluding the U.S.A.) and on historical patterns in passport issuance.

During the first two quarters of 1990-91, volume in Canada increased 8.1% and 6.5% respectively over last year. Beginning in June, a weakening in volume foreshadowed the recession, which was officially recognized in September. Monthly volume continued to deteriorate until, by January, passport volume was 3.9% lower than last year. Due to the