

3.5 Level and Quality of Services/Assistance Provided

The mission surveys asked each respective respondent to rate both the timeliness and quality of the consular services and assistance offered through the program to Canadians travelling/living abroad.

Chart 3.2 indicates the responses in percentage format to the question of timeliness and level of services/assistance provided through the missions. Overall results show that the timeliness and quality of consular services/assistance is good or excellent in the vast majority of missions, and has been improved or maintained at previous levels in the majority of instances. However 14% of the respondents suggested that the timeliness of passport issuances and services have declined in the past three years while 6% noted a poor quality of passport services in the previous three year period.

3.6 Adjustments to Increasing Demands

The increasing numbers of Canadians travelling, working and living abroad has resulted in an increasing demand for consular services/assistance in an environment of resource constraints faced by all government departments and programs. However, the mission surveys suggest that the missions are adapting to the resource issue in such a manner as to negate the effects of resource constraints and increasing demands.

More experienced staff at several posts has allowed the consular program there to adapt to the changing environment in which it must operate. Better-trained locally engaged personnel also resulted in improvements in the timeliness and quality of consular services. One post noted that better consular work organization and rationalization of consular services, as well as improved management resulted in improved timeliness and quality of consular services.

Several missions noted as well that their respective consular agents had more time to devote to supervising their staff, resulting in better consular services.

A major US post said the computerization of passport issuance resulted in greater time savings, and hence was a factor in improved service. The addition of a fulltime consular program officer was also a factor. Several posts mentioned that excellent Canada-based consular clerks were instrumental in the delivery of improved consular services.

A more efficient and younger staff was cited as the reason for