

Figure 4 CALL CENTRES ACCESS RATE
(In Percentages)



GETTING THROUGH TO US: CALL CENTER ACCESSIBILITY

Most calls are handled by our call center staff. In fact, in 1998-99 our call center staff responded to over 1.2 million calls—an accessibility rate of 93 percent. The industry standard is 70 percent.

designing and manufacturing the passport. The Passport Office also works closely with other government departments within Canada, foreign governments, law enforcement agencies and international organizations in dealing with passport-related security issues. Through constant vigilance, the Passport Office ensures that the trust placed in Canadian travel documents by travelers and inspection authorities around the world is well deserved.

Responsible spending

The Canadian Passport Office is a Special Operating Agency of the federal government's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. This means that, while it is part of the federal government, the Passport Office must keep its costs down and finance its activities entirely through sales of travel documents. It does not receive federal funding. In light of this context, the Passport Office conscientiously runs itself in a fashion similar to the private sector and strives for cost-effectiveness and efficiency, but not at the expense of the integrity and security of Canadian travel documents. For this reason, the Passport Office regularly encourages feedback

from its passport holders in order to serve them better and more efficiently.

Continuously improving service

How are we adapting to meet the needs of the coming years? We have completed all pilot projects related to switching from a manual passport-manufacturing process to IRIS, our new automated issuing system. When IRIS is *fully* up and running, it will further enhance the security and integrity of Canadian passports. It will make the application process easier and more convenient at the same time as it would introduce a series of flexible and integrated service delivery options to the issuing process. To further this objective, the Passport Office has also re-engineered its application forms to make it less burdensome to fill out. These new and simplified form will be introduced in the 1999-2000 fiscal year.

We design our products and services with the needs of our applicants in mind. For example, for business travelers it is essential that the passport be issued quickly and that it contains enough pages. Recreational travelers prefer easily accessible points of service and office hours that better suit their schedules.