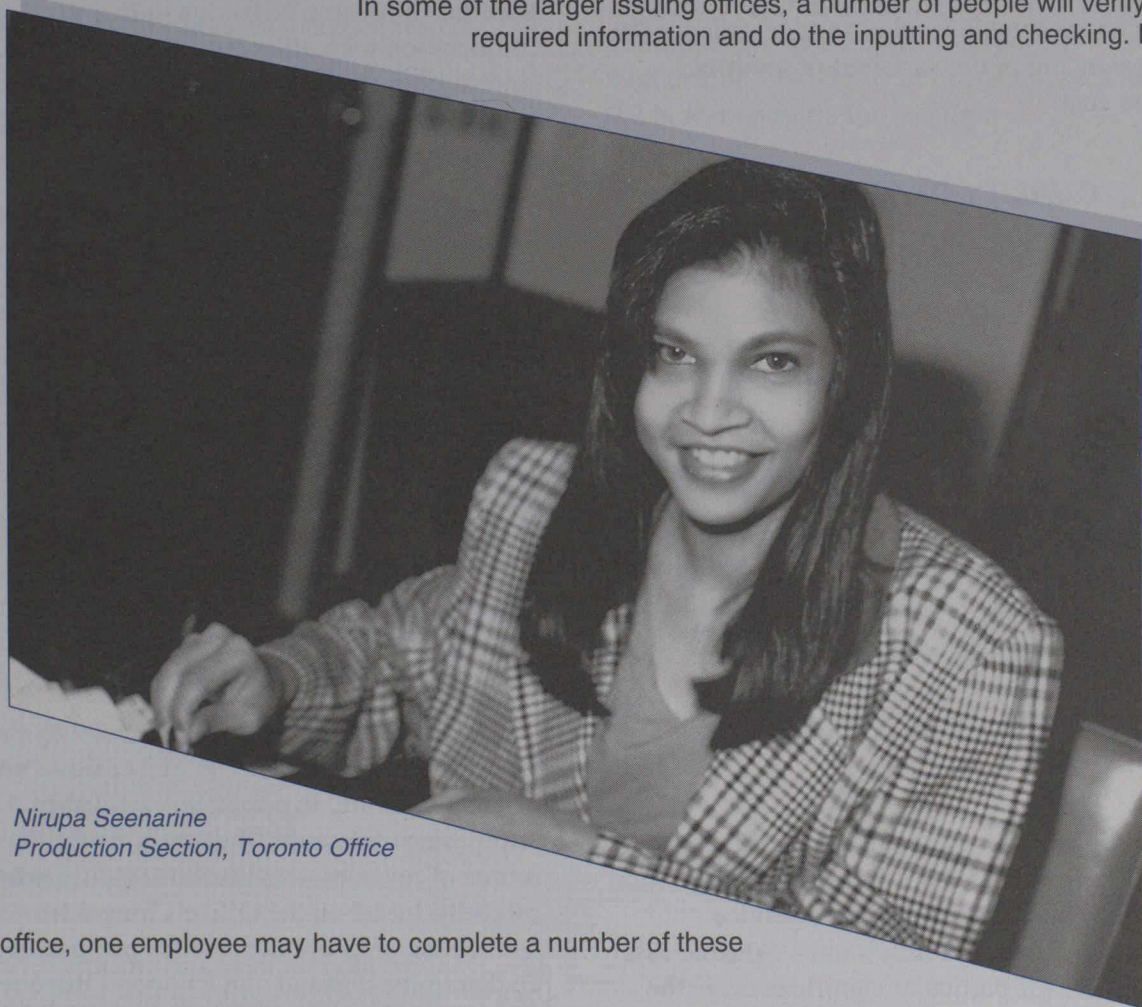




Although checked at all stages of the process, the passport meets two very stringent inspections: one at the lamination stage – when the picture is affixed – to ascertain that all input data are correct; and a final one which determines that the machine readable strip is in fact, machine readable. Canada is a pioneer in the area of machine readable travel documents and is promoting their use among other countries as a way of ensuring security and shortening entry inspection time for travellers.

In some of the larger issuing offices, a number of people will verify the required information and do the inputting and checking. In a



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small office, one employee may have to complete a number of these tasks.

Before the passport is released, information is fed to a master computer to ensure that there is no conflict with any other information on file about the applicant.

When your passport is ready, you pick it up at the Passport Office, where the examiner checks your identification before releasing the document to you. The whole process usually takes about five days (somewhat longer if delivered by mail).

A passport may be issued in less time in cases of death or illness in the family, or urgent business. To protect the principle of serving clients on a "first come-first served" basis, staff follow standard procedures in determining the urgency of each request. Some documented evidence may also be required before this special service is given. For the rare instance when a crisis requiring overseas travel occurs outside normal business hours, the Passport Office has an emergency service available through the Department's round-the-clock Watch Office.