Disclosure of Information or Production of Documents about Alleged Offenders at the Request of Private Individuals

1.24 a. Requests for disclosure of information, communications or documents obtained by a consular officer or his staff in their official capacity, which have been received from private individuals who are attempting to locate persons who have committed an alleged offence or from creditors who are attempting to collect debts, normally should be declined. The enquirers may be referred to lawyers, the local police, collection agencies or other appropriate officials or organizations.

b. Derogatory information obtained from outside agencies about a person, for example information received from a Better Business Bureau, should not be released to a third person. Any information that a Consulate releases to a third person is no longer privileged, and consequently the danger of infringing the laws of libel should be present in the minds of consular officers when dealing with such matters. If a Consulate is aware that an outside agency, such as a Better Business Bureau, possesses information about an individual, it may advise the enquirer to communicate directly with that agency. (see also 10.28).

Custody of Funds and Valuables

1.25 a. As a general rule, consular officers should not accept funds or valuables for safe-keeping. The enquirer should be directed to a local bank or similar organization which provides custodial services.

b. However, in cases of emergency, where no other course is reasonably open to the applicant, the Head of the Post may exercise his discretion in accepting funds or valuables for safe-keeping on behalf of a Canadian citizen. Currency should be counted in the presence of the owner. A fully itemized receipt should be signed in triplicate by the consular officer, countersigned by the owner of the funds or valuables and, if possible, signed also by an independent witness. In all cases, a signed statement, in triplicate, should be obtained from the person depositing the money or valuables, acknowledging that the deposit is made at the individual's own risk and recording his understanding that, in the event of loss arising from any cause whatsoever, he will not be indemnified by the post or the Canadian Government. A copy of each of the two statements mentioned above should be given to the depositor, a copy retained at the post, and a copy sent to the Department.

c. It should be clearly understood by all parties that if the owner does not claim his effects within a stated period