

Employees of the Passport Office have consulted with authorities in Quebec over the rewriting of the Civil Code which has included changes to the registration of births in the province of Quebec. These changes have affected our passport issuing procedures.

Agreement has been reached with the Department of National Defence over ensuring rapid treatment of passport requests for members of the Canadian Forces going to posts overseas. Personnel from the offices in Fredericton, Halifax, and Sainte-Foy took part in the discussions. The arrangements provide for Passport Office personnel to go to military bases to handle passport applications as required.

An automated system in the Montreal office facilitates the processing of applicants. The national toll-free information number was partly decentralized so that all calls originating from the province of Quebec could be handled by operators in Montreal. This provided better service for Quebec customers and reduced costs for the central system.

The region devised a communications strategy to raise the visibility of the Passport Office in the Eastern region and to bring us closer to our clients. These objectives were achieved through several initiatives. The region participated in the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Canadian Travel Agents in Québec City, and in their regular meeting in St. John's. We communicated with the network of travel agencies in Atlantic Canada and took part in travel shows and other similar events from Montreal to St. John's. Eastern region employees also took part in radio and television interviews about travel and passport services, and held displays in commercial centres in Montreal, Laval, Rosemere, Anjou, Pointe-Claire, Saint-Bruno, Roberval, Alma, Chicoutimi, and Moncton.



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Information sessions were held in schools in the Saguenay, at the Community College in St. Andrews, and at the Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors in Moncton.

The Eastern region faced several challenges in the area of human resources. Preparation and retraining of support staff ensured a positive transition to new functions dictated by technological changes and empowerment.

Ontario Operations

In addition to its seven issuing offices in Hamilton, London, North York, Scarborough, Thunder Bay, Toronto, and Windsor, the Ontario region opened new offices at Brampton, Kitchener, and St. Catharines during the past year.

The new service points caused shifts in business volumes within Metro Toronto and in the "Golden Horseshoe"—the area around the western end of Lake Ontario. The uncertainties and changes in volume brought out the best in managers and staff alike, as offices adjusted to meet demands, and staff travelled between offices with burgeoning client bases. Volume rose by eight per cent in the Ontario region: