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**PROTECTION OF  
PRIVATE  
INTERESTS**

During the past year, over 1.1 million passports were issued in Canada and abroad. This was an increase of 9 per cent over the previous year.

Over 610,000 services were provided by the Department's Consular Services to Canadians abroad, ranging from responding to routine enquiries to answering appeals for help that tested the resourcefulness of consular staff.

The conduct of Canada's immigration program abroad has been the responsibility of the Department since 1981. During the year under review, the trend towards higher visa issuance continued, with 186,788 immigrant

visas being issued. This was an increase of 18.2 per cent over the previous year.

In 1988/89 the Department's target levels for government-sponsored refugees was met for the fifth consecutive year. With the arrival of 13,462 government-sponsored refugees and another 21,212 privately sponsored arrivals, the refugee component of Canada's annual immigration level was comfortably met.

Compliance with the Access to Information and Privacy Acts was rigorously observed by the Department, which processed 347 requests for information from the public, and facilitated the screening of records for transfer to the National Archives.

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**INTERNATIONAL  
LAW**

Many of the activities of the External Affairs and International Trade Canada have a significant legal dimension. Therefore the efforts of the Legal Bureau are reflected through many of the achievements of other bureaus and divisions.

On July 27, 1989, the Government of Canada granted its consent to a U.S. request under the Canada-U.S. Arctic Cooperation Agreement to have the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker *Polar Star* navigate the waters of the Northwest

Passage. This was the second such U.S. request since the Agreement, which requires that Canadian consent be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA), two dispute settlement panels were established. The first panel looked at FTA compatibility of Canada's landing requirement for salmon and herring. The second panel was concerned with U.S. restrictions on importing Canadian lobster.