

SCOPE OF CONSULAR ACTIVITIES

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What are consular activities? An appropriate definition appears in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which was agreed upon in 1963 and acceded to by Canada in 1974. The definition may be summarized and put in Canadian terms as follows:

- a) Protecting in countries abroad the interests of Canada, of Canadian citizens and protected persons,* both individuals and bodies corporate;
- b) Promoting commercial, economic, cultural and scientific relations between Canada and countries abroad, and reporting to the Canadian government on these aspects of life in countries abroad;
- c) Helping and assisting Canadian citizens and protected persons;
- d) Issuing passports and travel documents to Canadians and visas to persons wishing to visit Canada who require visas to do so;
- e) Performing in countries abroad certain notarial, legal and administrative functions concerning individuals, bodies corporate, property, shipping and aircraft.

This list does not correspond exactly to what is generally understood as "consular activities" in Canadian parlance. Those functions mentioned in b), for instance, are, in Canadian practice, regarded as even more part of the diplomatic function than of the consular function, and will not, therefore, be dealt with further in this paper. They nevertheless form part of the general context within which other consular activities are carried on. On the other hand,

* "Protected persons", while not yet an accepted term in Canadian parlance, is used in this paper to signify landed immigrants, refugees and stateless persons.