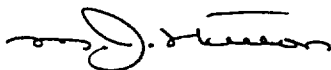


There are many challenges that face us over the next few years and I feel that with the direction outlined in this document, along with the input and commitment of our employees, we will excel at providing economical, efficient and high quality service to Canadians. I am truly looking forward to the next few years. I hope you are too!

Michael J. Hutton,
Chief Executive Officer



Introduction

Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it. Strategic planning is useful only if it improves strategic *thinking* and *acting*; it is not a substitute for them. Strategic thinking forces a focus on the future. Strategic planning directs attention to crucial issues and challenges and it provides a systematic approach to managed change. Ultimately, all business decisions are made intuitively—irrefutable proof is only found in hindsight. However, rigorous analysis can lessen the degree of risk, make tradeoffs visible and improve the odds of a positive result.

In today's public service, strategic awareness is critical. The federal public service, in general, and the Passport Office in particular, are in a period of change. Budgets are decreasing, demands—often conflicting demands—are increasing, and new technology provides opportunities to improve many aspects of our operations. Departments and programs can no longer afford to operate in isolation. Change has an increasingly cascading effect as new internal and external alliances are formed. The stimuli can be overwhelming.

To manage itself proactively, the Passport Office has initiated a strategic planning process to develop a shared plan and vision for the organization that will guide our decision making over the next four years. This plan, the result of a lengthy consultation and information gathering process, identifies four strategic initiatives or imperatives on which we must focus to ensure the Passport Office is successful in a changing world. These imperatives will set the direction for our Agency and provide the basis for both decision-making and employee communication.