

In addition, we believe that on-line enquiry and verification will become increasingly important in the 1990s. Accordingly, we intend to augment our database and prepare it for secure access by authorized agencies. We also intend to develop new systems and procedures for using and taking advantage of the new technologies, further enhancing document security.

Faced with anticipated volume growth and additional product and service expectations, we must ensure that productivity and service levels are maintained or enhanced while accommodating these modern requirements.

The Technology Enhancement Plan (TEP) has evolved in concept and timetable since the 1992-93 Business Plan. The approach discussed in that plan contemplated a gradual design and implementation effort over the next several years, with interim pilot or demonstration systems set up in the Passport Office to test the concept and facilitate specification of the ultimate system. Now, however, the availability of different contracting mechanisms within Supply and Services Canada (SSC) enables us to proceed directly to contract with a sophisticated industry systems designer/integrator through all stages of analysis, design and development. The result will optimize both the cost and timetable for implementing changes while maintaining a low-risk factor.

Objectives

- To re-design passport production systems and procedures, taking advantage of modern technologies for image capture, storage and retrieval, document image management and digitized image printing.
- To implement a fully on-line environment locally, in the regions and, where feasible, within the consular network.
- To facilitate secure access to, and retrieval from, the Passport Office database for both internal and external users for verification purposes.
- To build better work structures and work flows compatible with the government's job enrichment and empowerment initiatives.

Anticipated Benefits. For the Passport Office, the Technology Enhancement Plan should lead to greater efficiency and work simplification; universality across offices; automated statistical measurement and quality control; reduced opportunities for error; and increased security in the issuance, tracking and verification of passports.

All of these benefits will considerably enhance the role and public profile of the Passport Office, and will permit greater participation in government policy objectives as well as enabling us to accommodate anticipated growth in demand.

1993-94 Activities. Early in the fiscal year we will release a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a systems integrator/systems partner to carry this project forward through all of its phases. To select an industry associate, we are using the Common Purpose Procurement Methodology recently introduced by SSC. The selected supplier will participate fully in analysis, design and system implementation, in effect becoming a member of the extended professional team carrying out the Technology Enhancement project.

The project will be carried out in four phases:

- definition of project and user requirements;
- research and development of alternative systems;
- installation and evaluation of pilot;
- full operational implementation.

In the coming year, we will carry out the first phase and commence work on the second.

The project and user requirements definition phase will involve a review of Passport Office operations, subsequent development of a statement of user requirements for the new system, and a detailed plan for its development and implementation. This phase will also include a review of possible technologies for printing graphic images on the passport label and for printing an accompanying wallet card as and when such a card may be approved.