

## 7. Special Passport Security

In section 4 and elsewhere, reference was made to the potential for increased Canadian and international focus on the reliability and integrity of passports and other travel documents. This focus may be intensified not only by illegal immigration, terrorism, and drug trafficking concerns, but also by the foreseeable general availability of technologies to forge passports. The ability to counter these concerns with technology that is becoming commonplace, such as efficient wide-bandwidth communications, digital image storage and retrieval, and new printing technologies, can be expected to create new demands for better security for passport issue and authentication.

The Passport Office, like its counterpart organizations elsewhere in the world, are facing what can be called the "passport fraud cycle". In essence this consists of a "motivation loop" for those individuals in society who wish to acquire a fraudulent passport. This is represented diagrammatically illustrated in figure 1 on the next page. Essentially an individual seeking a fraudulent passport has a fundamental choice between counterfeiting a new or existing passport, or trying to have an official passport issued in fraudulent circumstances. If too much risk is associated with trying to use a counterfeit passport, for example by better electronic on-line checking, then increased effort will be placed on having the PPO issue a "valid" passport to an applicant posing as a fictitious or dead citizen. The reverse is also true.

At the present time, unfortunately, little coordinated attention seems to be paid by Canada to this joint issue. Passports are issued with care and attention to detail, with many disguised security features in the passport document itself, but these are seldom if ever checked at Canadian entry border points. Canada has a Customs and Excise focus at its borders, and passport security features do not seem to be a priority. In this sense, the extensive security features built into the document itself seem pointless. Other countries, such as the USA, do read the machine-readable section of the Canadian passport, but this is only to facilitate a quick check for known undesirable foreigners on the US list; they do not verify the authenticity of the passport.