

1. Introduction and Summary.

In the late summer of 1991, the Passport Office of the Department of External Affairs and International Trade Canada was contemplating an internal review of its computer systems and its uses of informatics technology. Although the computer systems in place were supporting day-to-day operations in an efficient manner, they were nearing their capacity limits as well as approaching the end of their life cycle. The PPO also recognized possible new growth paths that existing computer systems were not able to provide.

As a result, the Passport Office ("PPO") decided to initiate a process of long range strategic planning for informatics over the next decade. The objective of this exercise was primarily to provide the PPO with a proper high level view to guide its specification and implementation of new systems and technologies in the short and medium term.

The first step in this process was the initiation of an independent consultant's study, incorporating a review of current computer operations, difficulties or limitations being encountered, and emerging technologies that might affect the PPO. The result of the study was to include a draft of a high-level plan that would permit the PPO to complete its detailed planning process in the context of the study results.

The study took place in the latter part of 1991, and this document represents the final report of study results and recommendations.

Conclusions.

The PPO issues more than 1.2 million passports per year, plus other travel documents, and the demand for this service has been increasing at an average of 6.5% per year for several years. These processes are accommodated very efficiently in the PPO, which rightfully prides itself on high levels of service provided at reasonable cost to the public. Services are available at a number of locations in Canada and at EAITC missions abroad, although there is limited or no on-line access