

CHAPTER 7 PROTECTION OF PRIVATE INTERESTS

Highlights

- Consular, Immigration and Passport Services now integrated.
- Consular Services abroad handle 752 747 requests for assistance.
- Canada has 5.6 million passports in circulation.
- Passport Office now Special Operating Agency.
- Departmental records screened for transfer to National Archives.

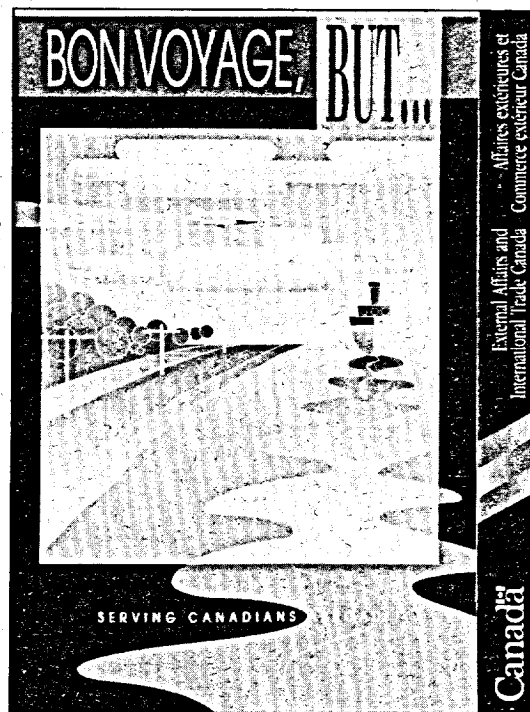
INTRODUCTION

One of the results of the Department's Corporate Review was the creation of the Consular Immigration and Passport Affairs Branch. While the consular and immigration programs were previously combined at the management level, the addition of the Passport

CONSULAR SERVICES

The Department has a mandate to protect and assist Canadians who live and travel abroad and to respond promptly to requests for help in situations of distress. The government attaches a high priority to this consular function which it provides in all Canadian missions abroad. This service is also carried out by some 52 honorary consuls and, in accordance with the Canada-Australia Consular Sharing Agreement, with 12 Australian missions.

During the year under review, over 752 747 services were provided to Canadians, ranging from responding to routine enquiries, to answering appeals for help that tested the resourcefulness of consular staff. In the course of duties, consular staff might help a student who has lost a passport; travel to an outlying village to assist a young Canadian traveller arrested for drug possession;



The brochure entitled *Bon Voyage, but ...* included with every new passport issued informs travellers which services are available abroad and which are not.

Office, now a Special Operating Agency, recognized the interrelationship of the three program areas at home and abroad. The integration of these services will result in more effective and efficient program delivery and improved service to the public.

help a distraught parent whose former spouse has abducted their child; or arrange for the burial of a Canadian who has died abroad.

Up-to-date contingency plans have been developed in Canadian missions abroad to permit prompt assistance to Canadians in case of natural catastrophe or civil unrest. During the Gulf War, some 600 Canadians received consular assistance, including evacuation flights from the region to Europe and Canada. Consular staff are guided in all policy decisions by the *Manual of Consular Instructions*, which is revised on a regular basis. The Branch also provides policy guidance to missions by way of circular telegrams and letters.

As a result of the Corporate Review decision to integrate immigration and consular programs, the Division placed renewed emphasis on consular