

through 52 honorary consuls and 12 Australian posts with which we have formed a valuable partnership. Last year alone, our Department provided over 600,000 specific consular services or responses. These included:

- almost 3,000 enquiries concerning the well-being or whereabouts of Canadians;
- over 1,100 cases involving the death of Canadians abroad;
- over 600 child-custody cases;
- 300 cases of repatriating Canadians;
- 2,000 cases where Canadians were hospitalized in other countries; and
- over 900 incidents in which our citizens were detained by legal authorities abroad.

In 1990, our Department, represented through passport offices across Canada and missions abroad, issued over 1.2 million passports -- a 4.5 per cent increase over the previous year.

The risk of misfortune can never be eliminated abroad any more than it can be at home. But it can be minimized. Part of that is simple precaution and planning:

- getting documents in order;
- securing health coverage where needed, ensuring vaccination where required; and
- registering with our missions abroad where that is recommended.

Another element is knowing what our missions can do when trouble arises. Those services include:

- in situations of legal or medical difficulty, helping Canadians find professional help;
- assisting seriously ill Canadians to return home;
- in cases of deaths abroad, helping to arrange for burial or return of the body to Canada;
- issuing replacement passports if these are lost or stolen; and