

News Release

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\$25 FEE FOR QUALITY CONSULAR SERVICES

Excellent and essential: that is how Canadians who travel, live or work abroad describe consular services. In order to be able to maintain the level and quality of these services given the current fiscal climate, a \$25 fee will be levied, as of today, at the time passports or other travel documents are issued. The money collected will pay for the costs of consular services, which are estimated at approximately \$35 million a year.

The new \$25 consular fee represents an additional cost of only \$5 a year added to the cost of a five-year passport. The combined cost to acquire a Canadian passport is \$60 (\$25 + \$35). This is still lower than the price charged for passports alone in most other industrialized countries, such as France (\$98), Japan (\$139) and Mexico (\$64).

The introduction of a new consular fee was announced in the February 1995 budget. This fee is consistent with the Government's policy of having users pay for services.

Each year, consular services are provided to 1.5 to 2 million Canadians, through a worldwide network of 237 points of service, such as embassies and consulates. Consular services include assistance in cases of emergencies, accidents, illnesses and financial or legal difficulties.

- 30 -

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