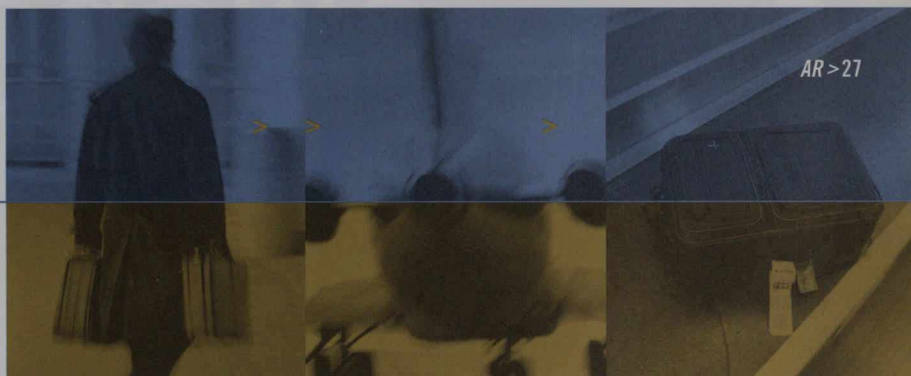


issues that concern external stakeholders. The Secretariat handles matters where independence from other functions and operations are most appropriate for both the organization and the department. The Secretariat also took the lead in dealing with horizontal issues in government (sharing of common data, locations, services, etc.), as well as responsibility for internal audits. It is intended for the Secretariat to broaden its mandate to include vertical integration with other governmental partnerships and/or co-

operation with the private sector, Crown corporations or other agencies.

Emphasis on long-term strategic planning has resulted in the identification of four strategic imperatives, the implementation of a process to address crucial issues and challenges to the Passport Office, and the introduction of a systematic approach to managed change. The new strategic planning process will develop a shared plan and vision that will guide our decision-making over the next four years.

? > One of the earliest mentions of passports dates back to about 450 BC. Nehemiah, an official serving King Artaxerxes of ancient Persia, asked permission to travel to Judah. The King agreed and gave Nehemiah a letter “to the governors of the province beyond the river,” requesting safe passage as he travelled through their lands.



Canadian passports still carry such a letter of request. Inside the front cover is a letter issued in the name of Her Majesty the Queen. Like Nehemiah's letter, this also requests safe passage and protection for the bearer.

Not until the reign of King Louis XIV of France did these “letters of request” become popular. The King granted personally signed documents to his court favourites. The letter was dubbed “passe port” literally meaning “to pass through a port” because most international travel was by sailing ship. Hence the term “passport”. <