

By conducting environmental scans on a continual basis, we will be able to understand the issues, identify our core activities, and prepare for our challenges.

The publication of the Executive Committee's Records of Decision (ROD's) is aimed at providing information to all stakeholders (those who influence the direction of the Agency), internally and externally. As mentioned, the Canada Award for Excellence evaluation showed that there are some opportunities to improve our services, policies and processes, and that hard data and communication with our people and applicants are critical to our success.

Managers received greater training and improved systems. We have also deployed 90 percent of the modules required for PASSAP (the integrated financial and material management system) to our critical users; deployed a salary management system; conducted focus groups with management to identify job competency profiles; and selected pilot sites for self-directed work teams.

Technological advances have included Phase 4 of the IRIS system (information system used for capturing, archiving, and retrieving digital images), and preparations are being made for Phase 5; installation is expected in 1998, and the rollout of IRIS in early 1999. Several projects to support IRIS were completed this year, including the installation of Windows 95 and the upgrade of desktop software. Additionally, our networks were enhanced and management software was developed. We extended the WAN to three additional sites and expanded our hardware architecture and software assets. The Record Management Automation pilot is now complete, and rollout is expected during 1998-99. The SIGNET connection was established with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), and now the Passport Office has access to COSMOS and the department's new financial system, with the hopes that the intranet and corporate applications will soon be available. The Forms Program has provided an improved method for updating application forms, as well as providing alternative applications for other clients (braille, large print, electronic, etc.). We are also in the process of decentralizing the purchase of publications, printing, distribution and photocopying. Passport policies, manuals and written communications, as well as statistical reporting, are being improved and evaluated.

Telephony services have gone a long way to expanding our services, and call volume is up 19 percent this year since inception of the Call Centre, a trend which is expected to continue. Easier access for the public to information was provided with the 1-800 number while a redesign of the blue pages made the number easier to identify. Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) has taken new steps this year, with more equipment, training programs, improved traffic capacity, and the development of a Call Centre management team.

#### SUMMARY

The services of the Passport Office improve every year, and with new technological advances, improved human resources, and superior planning, we will continue to strive to provide excellent services to our clients.