

## CHAPTER 3 - BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

The Passport Office is on course with the renewal of its issuance process. We are redesigning the passport production system and procedures, and taking advantage of modern technologies for image capture, storage and retrieval, document management, and digitized image printing.

In the future, information technology will be used to its full advantage in redesigning the delivery of our services. Through an integrated electronic link between offices, the Passport Office will have enhanced communications capabilities and be more accessible through the standardization of computer programs and hardware. Our aim is a fully on-line environment both in Canada and, where feasible, in the consular network.

We will continue to ensure the security of the Passport Office data base, with limited access for both internal and external users.

Enhanced information technology will mean the possibility of more centralization of services, added efficiency, and profitability. Eventually, the Passport Office will have a whole new look, and a more streamlined production and issuing process.

Across Canada, and in missions abroad, client needs will drive the design and delivery of all services. New offices and more convenient hours, locations, and parking arrangements have already been introduced. These and other improvements will continue.

Traditionally we have offered products and services related to travel documents. Now we are also investigating additional services we could provide. One suggestion being considered is the introduction of a machine-readable passport

card. The card would facilitate travel to the United States by greatly reducing the time it would take clients to clear immigration and customs. Other advantages would include increased security and better border control.

In the United States, a similar card has already been introduced by the Department of Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS). The "INSPASS," as it is called, allows preapproved citizens to use automatic machines with biometric recognition devices such as hand-geometry to clear them through immigration. In other words, a machine would read the shape and dimension of the card-holder's hand to determine that the card is indeed being used by the person to whom it was issued. The card does not allow the holder to bypass customs. The Passport Office is following the introduction of this service with interest.

In Canada, a proposed "single-window" approach to government services would mean that clients would no longer have to deal with several different administrative programs and departments in government. There are benefits to this approach and the Passport Office is studying its ramifications, especially from a security standpoint.

In the future, the Passport Office will vigorously pursue joint venture opportunities with other departments and other SOAs, governments, and the private sector. We will provide the expertise we have already established in producing and issuing secure and effective documents at reasonable cost, and our research shows that this is an area appropriate for development.

Whatever we undertake, the Passport Office, through its loyal employees, will continue to pursue excellence in the provision of travel documents and in responding to the needs of the Canadian public.

