

6. DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC RESPONSE

6.1 Need to Prepare

Perhaps the most important question and also the most difficult to be raised during the evaluation is, "what should be the consular services provided by the Government of Canada in the Nineties?" Unfortunately since the Nineties are almost here, this question takes on considerable urgency.

This section focuses on several important dimensions of this concern: the range and extent of services; demand management; future concerns in delivering services and the training of consular officers. These are strategic issues which must be resolved if EAITC is to continue to provide high quality consular services.

6.2 Strategic Issues

Futurists predict that the world as we know it today will undergo major changes in the Nineties. The driving forces behind these changes which include the globalization of markets and improved communications, have already had their impact.

The coming changes in the consular program are illustrated in Figure 6-1. As illustrated, changes in the foreign environments around the world as well as the Program clientele will lead to adjustments in consular policy, strategy and the Program itself. It can also be anticipated that significant changes will occur in the EAITC's network of missions due to resource constraints. Changes in this infrastructure will require that new and innovative ways be found to provide the services. While it can be predicted with a reasonable degree of confidence that major changes will occur, the determination of when they will occur and what their impact will be is difficult. The issues addressed in the balance of this section are considered essential in adapting the Consular Program to the Nineties.

6.3 Adapting EAITC's Consular Services

As has already been noted, the Auditor General's Report has recommended that EAITC more clearly define the range and extent of services provided to Canadians abroad. Concern was also expressed by the Auditor General that the general description of the range and extent of consular services as provided in the Manual of Consular Instruction left too much to the judgement of the local consular officers. It was further stated that: