

B o n V o y a g e

Travelling abroad this summer?

But

Each year, Canadians take about 90 million trips to foreign destinations for pleasure, adventure or business. While most of these trips go smoothly, sometimes things go wrong. You could be the victim of an accident, a natural disaster or a criminal act. What can you do when you are far away from home in a country where you don't know a soul or don't speak the language? A situation like that could be quite worrisome.

But wait! Whatever may have happened, Canadian assistance is at hand. Most of Canada's missions offer consular services, designed to protect and safeguard Canadians and their interests abroad. Consular officials can provide services that range from simply replacing a lost or stolen passport to arranging for medical help or assisting your evacuation from a war zone or an area affected by a natural disaster. **Consular services** operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through a network of over 250 offices in more than 180 countries.

Even where there is no Canadian diplomatic mission, you can still get help. In some countries, Canada has appointed private citizens honorary consuls. While they cannot provide the full range of consular services, they can still be of great assistance.

In other countries, Canadians can seek assistance at an

Australian diplomatic or consular mission.

Here is a good example of Canadian consular services in action: While waiting for a taxi outside his hotel on a South Pacific island, a retired Vancouver man was robbed of all his money and identification, and suffered three broken ribs in the assault. An officer from the Canadian Consulate, alerted by the hotel, quickly arrived on the scene. The officer ensured that the man received medical treatment, helped him contact his health insurance company, made arrangements for payment of medical bills and replaced the stolen passport. The officer also arranged for the man to transfer funds from his bank in Vancouver through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in Ottawa. The funds were received the same day through the Consulate. ●

READ THIS!

When planning a trip abroad, there are countries you would not even think of visiting—nations at war, for example, or areas devastated by natural disaster. If you go anyway, it's at your own risk. In other cases, you plan on visiting a country or must go on a business trip, and you would like some basic information about your destination. In all cases, DFAIT consular services can be of great assistance. There are two types of information available. **Travel Reports** provide information on security and political conditions, health issues and entry requirements for over 200 foreign destinations. **Travel Advisories** (also sent to the media and constantly updated) are warnings to avoid a country or to leave it because the level of danger is too high to ensure your safety. To view reports and advisories, consult the Travel section of the Department's Web site (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca); fax us at 1-800-575-2500 (in Canada) or (613) 944-2500; or call 1-800-267-6788 (in Canada) or (613) 944-6788.

To better prepare Canadians for travelling abroad, DFAIT has established the Consular Awareness Program, which provides several free "safe travel" publications and leaflets. They include *Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller*; *Bon Voyage, But . . .*; *Crossing the 49th: A Compendium of Bumps on the Road for Canadians Going South*; *Canadian Performers: How to Enter the United States*; *México: ¿Qué pasa?—A Guide for Canadian Visitors*; *China, including Hong Kong: A Guide for Canadian Visitors*; *A Guide for Canadians Imprisoned Abroad*; *International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*; *Retirement Abroad: Seeing the Sunsets*; *Working Abroad: Unravelling the Maze*; and the Weekly Travel Bulletin. For copies, visit the Travel section of the DFAIT Web site, or call 1-800-267-8376 (in Canada) or (613) 944-4000.

Wherever you go outside Canada this summer, you know you can count on the efficient and dedicated assistance of the Canadian Consular Services. *Bon voyage . . . and enjoy the pleasures of a safe trip!*