

**Goals**> The Passport Office had two clear human resource related goals.

*Goal 1:* To empower employees at the operational level, implementing a new organizational structure in which passport examiner positions are classified at the CR-5 level.

The de-layering of our organization, since 1993, has been a gradual and lengthy process, an attempt to reduce our hierarchy to a maximum of four levels. This new organizational structure had a great impact on the Passport Examiner positions, as a process was undertaken to empower these positions to the CR-5 level in early 1996. Even with three years of preparation, this was a large undertaking, and the backgrounds, experience and expectations of management and staff across the country were taken into consideration—truly a team effort. Organizational restructuring needed to take place both within existing resource allocations and during peak service periods. We successfully achieved our goal. All members of the national team and management played major roles in the success of the project, and subsequently, the necessary staffing actions took place.

AR>34

Throughout the organization, all passport examiners were assessed against the same expectations, and as anticipated, most qualified on the first attempt. Much of the success was due to the implementation of bridging/training activities and testing tools. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of everyone involved, we are confident that 100 percent success is well within reach.

*Goal 2:* To enrich our corporate culture in order to develop a well-informed, effective, service-oriented workforce.

The employee recognition program has had great success this year. The existing award policy was reviewed and revised, and a new program implemented. A committee representative of all areas and levels of organization was created to evaluate and approve submissions and to determine suitable awards. New certificates were designed/developed and a promotional campaign was implemented to explain the program. Employees and management responded positively to the new approach and award system.

Training activities for piloting the new information capturing and archiving system were successfully managed this year. We established a computer

training course to prepare employees for the new automated systems. The current training curriculum is expected to be complete by the end of 1997-98, and can be used by examiners who wish to improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills.

An annotated video library developed by Western Operations provides employees the opportunity for home study in such areas as management customer relations, operational information, and personal safety awareness.

Ontario Operations also implemented training initiatives for staff and a cross-cultural communications workshop exclusively for Passport Office personnel. In addition, a technical support advisor position was created to provide hands-on guidance to users and support to the archiving and retrieval system pilots.

A variety of human resource policies were published and courses in staffing and staff relations were delivered throughout the Agency. The review of staffing legislation and accountability framework is ongoing, as is an evaluation of the human resource community.

And finally, the Passport Office personnel also participated in the consular training program, both in Canada and abroad, and the course instruction proved beneficial.

### **Propelling ahead**

The Passport Office as an organization is moving rapidly ahead, and its people are in step with the process. They have taken the initiative to resolve complex issues and to accommodate the needs of our clients in every reasonable way. Currently, there is an increasing demand within the Passport Office for people with strong leadership, communication, financial and strategic planning skills, but we recognize that the skills required in the future are rapidly changing at all levels in the organization. We need to develop the profile of competitiveness required to meet our future challenges. While initially we are facing skill shortages in such specialized areas as information technology, the Passport Office is working hard to move towards the future. In the same sense that the passport is recognized as a strong symbol, so too is our staff recognized for their high quality and standards of excellence. Our goal is to keep them in step with our journey and the rapidly changing environment.