

Technology cost-benefits and organizational refinement:

Goal 1: First and foremost in our goals was the expectation that technological advancements and processes (information systems, credit/debit cards, CANPASS) would provide more cost-effective solutions to our services.

Studies show that a successful implementation of the common card technology initiatives will result in lower production costs, strengthen operational efficiencies and support the initiatives being staged by the other Passport Office and CIC cooperation project teams.

With the successful implementation of credit/debit card use, more cost-effective financial processes result in higher benefit/cost.

The Wide Area Network implemented to connect Ottawa, Montreal, North York, Kitchener and Vancouver to the Headquarters LAN improved the efficiency of e-mail and data communications, and paved the way for Internet access and the automated system pilots.

Fibre optics at headquarters was expanded to include connections to a new cable room and the installation of a high speed networking switch in the computer rooms. This allows expanded services offered over the LAN without affecting desktop performance.

Telephone technology resulted in the effective delivery of automated systems, greatly reducing the strain on human and financial resources, and improving customer service.

With improved records management operations, the Management Services directorate was able to provide cost-effective microfilm services here and abroad. A study for an automated records management system was completed, and a contract was awarded to install the Foremost system, which has full records management and electronic document retrieval capabilities. It will greatly improve cost-effectiveness by providing more timely on-line retrieval of information to offices across the country.

Templates were created to allow electronic access and creation of frequently used documents (memorandums, facsimile sheets) instantly, thus reducing the production and printing cost of these documents in hardcopy form. The electronic forms software (Informs) was used to create forms as masters for users to complete electronically, reducing the composition

costs associated with the preparation of masters for printing purposes.

Electronic versions of manuals, policies, operating procedures and other documents in production this year and next will greatly reduce printing, publishing and purchasing costs, as will the elimination of word processing positions (instead contracting is acquired as needed).

Mail Support Services instituted a passport application tracking system using bar-coding in the House of Commons mail service.

A new trouble ticketing/inventory system was implemented in order to better track and record help requests, which in turn results in a better track of support calls and the development of more cost-effective responses to these issues.

Goal 2: To improve the Passport Office's management framework for business planning and budgeting, and to support effective decision-making by managers in the Passport Office by streamlining and integrating administrative and financial processes and information systems.

A revised Passport Office budgetary cycle along with a new resource planning framework was implemented. This provided the Executive Committee with more frequent budgetary forecasts and a standardized information base from which to review and approve projects and directorate base budgets.

With the streamlining and integration of improved administrative and financial processes, improved decision making by management became more feasible. The increased access to the financial management information system will result in more effective financial planning. Configuration, prototyping and training for the system will take place during 1997-98.

New processes with DND reduced the examination process, and expanded the cost effectiveness of services, as did the post-billing process.

With implementation of "flying squad" strategies (the re-assignment of human resources to areas of high service demand), more cost-effective methods for utilizing human resources were successful, particularly with the use of part time, casual, seasonal and student help.

As well, a Corporate Secretariat was created as a pilot project within the Passport Office to address