

Government On-Line/ Passport On-Line

Government On-Line (GOL) is the government-wide initiative to provide Canadian citizens and businesses with comprehensive electronic access to government services. This multi-year project aims to make all federal government departments and agencies accessible through a single common Web site by April 2004.

This Internet gateway will provide all Canadians with access to government information and services directly from their home, school or business computer. The Web site will also offer a window on Canada's diverse culture and environment, not only for Canadians but also for people around the world.

The GOL initiative includes the development of pathfinder projects that will serve as the first phase of on-line services. The Passport Office has been chosen the pathfinder project for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Thanks to the security measures of the Passport On-Line initiative, currently being developed, Canadians will soon have the convenience of applying for travel documents on-line. Overall transaction time will be reduced and access to passport services for those living in remote areas or outside the country will be increased. The Government of Canada is providing \$1.6 million in funding for this project.

The Internet also makes possible other initiatives, such as the development of an on-line system for verifying citizenship and birth records. The Passport Office has initiated discussions with Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the

13 provincial and territorial vital statistics registrars to develop a system for verifying citizenship on-line. On-line verification of birth records will help eliminate fraud.

Discussions are also underway with the private sector to develop a secure on-line payment system linked to the Passport Office financial management system (PASSAP).

Queue Management System

IRIS counter transactions take an average of eight minutes but more complex applications can take longer, thus increasing waiting times for other clients. Our new Q-Matic system for efficiently prioritizing customer needs and allocating staff has now been implemented in 17 regional offices.

The system includes a ticket printer, counter information, electronic displays, and a computer workstation. A coordinator analyzes the complexity of each application for customers in the queue and determines the best way of processing them. Finally, the coordinator directs each customer to the examiner who can best serve him or her. Eventually, every passport office with four or more counters will be equipped with the Q-Matic system.

The Q-Matic software creates a statistical database of transaction and waiting times and peak volumes over the course of the day, week, and month. This provides managers with a global view of their operations and permits analysis of walk-in traffic in order to anticipate peak service demand. Management training for implementation is now underway.