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The **Refugee Travel Documents** are issued to persons who have been determined by Immigration Canada to be refugees under the 1951 United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees and are legally landed (or on a Minister's permit pending landing) in Canada. Refugee Travel Documents are endorsed for travel to all countries, except the holder's country of origin. They are valid for two years but may be extended for an additional period of one or two years to a maximum of five years.

**Certificates of Identity** are issued to non-Canadians legally landed who are stateless or unable to obtain a travel document from their country of origin and have resided in Canada for less than three years. The Certificate of Identity is endorsed for travel to countries specified in the document and valid for not less than one year or more than two years, with one-year extension periods up to a maximum of three years.

The Passport Office is a leader in producing machine-readable documents which can be used by Immigration Officers to quickly process travellers. Interest in this technology began in the early 1970s. A surge in international travel meant that air terminals were flooded with travellers trying to pass through immigration and customs. In the future, processing of travellers will be further simplified by emerging technologies.

The Passport Office is constantly looking for new technologies to improve its service to clients. It has made significant progress in implementing the Technology Enhancement Plan which is designed to incorporate modern technologies in the issuing process of Canadian travel documents. Key staff members are involved with private contractors in developing the new technological system.

The Office is also studying the feasibility of introducing a wallet-sized Passport Card. Its purpose is to facilitate movement across international borders. The primary beneficiaries of the card will be frequent travellers to and from the United States.

## The Challenge

In carrying out its mandate, the Passport Office must constantly balance the variables of quality of service, security and cost.

Client service lies at the core of the corporate philosophy of the Passport Office. Today it is more important than ever before to provide service as efficiently, effectively and economically as possible.

The organization recognizes that its employees are its most important asset in serving the public. To this end, the Office has taken a number of steps to develop a highly motivated work force. Employees have been encouraged to take the initiative in dealing with complicated issues. The Office has rewarded those who consistently perform their duties at a high-level. It has also provided employees with the tools they need to do the job. Work areas have been improved, training courses offered and the latest in information technology is being introduced throughout the organization.