

In addition to the passport cards, pilot tests have begun for the CANPASS project. These CANPASS cards were issued to frequent U.S.-Canada travellers, with the hope of improving efficiency for regular business travellers. The Vancouver Passport Office continued the issuance of the CANPASS optical memory cards for the Vancouver International Airport pilot project. Information was downloaded via modem to the CANPASS workstation, where the cards are produced, and then shipped to the airport centre. In addition to the CANPASS cards, the Passport Office was responsible for the operation of the CANPASS-Airport Enrollment Centre. The acceptance for registration and applications was set up, which included the review of applications to confirm the accuracy of information, identity and nationality.

Goal 3: To refine the Passport Office's service culture to ensure that it responds to our clients' expectations by enhancing our service standards and performance measurement mechanisms, introducing debit and credit card technology, reviewing service delivery modalities, providing on-line information on the Internet, and introducing new outreach services to our clients. The recently completed National Client Survey has provided guidance in our work towards improving service culture.

Numerous aspects of this goal were achieved by the Passport Office this year. As described by the regional offices, early success was demonstrated by the credit/debit card system. As well, an Internet website is in place to explain the history and services of the Passport Office. Further, there were a number of successful outreach projects, promotional campaigns and kits, and educational aids (videotapes, films, etc.), including an award winning video.

The Passport Office has also improved efficiency by simplifying internal procedures, including Date of Birth variations and Master Index updates, and the design of forms and manuals.

The Birth Certificates Book was rewritten using the Information Mapping Method and sample birth documents were scanned and are now available electronically for viewing. As well, numerous publications and manuals are now available electronically, allowing wider access by staff.

This year, Passport Policies, Operating Procedures, Written Communications Procedures, and Administrative Procedures were amended and improved.

Records management provided information on administrative files with speed and efficiency this year, and responded to 35 000 microfilm requests abroad, and 100 000 microfilm requests within Canada.

The evolution of the quality audit positions mandate has generated results this year. Auditors' ongoing instructions to missions and their contributions towards the consular training program have resulted in a decrease in the number of errors made by missions despite an increase in the number of applications processed. Continued participation on the consular training program was very beneficial this year, as we act on a more "as required" basis to train consular staff. The introduction of the Consular passport issuance program at missions greatly contributed to the quality of services this year.

This year, the introduction of the Policy Decision Request system allowed key cross-sectional and operational issues to be reviewed and investigated so that all relevant policy and procedural solutions can be examined.

Future quality service goals have also been set, including the introduction of data downloading to allow for instantaneous entry to the Master Index of passport records from missions and regional offices.

Driving ahead

This year, the Passport Office celebrated considerable advancements in its operational, organizational and service quality, and considers the results of pilot projects and operational projects as positive and constructive feedback. New services and technologies allow the Passport Office to reach a larger audience, and to promote the success of the Agency. A high volume of complimentary correspondence was received from clients, and service demands continue to increase. As a result, the Passport Office will continue its long-term plans, and to consistently aim to improve quality and expand services.