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Nancy Rainboth Examiner, Winnipeg Office



The services of the Passport Office improve every year and with new technological advances, improved human resources, and superior planning, we will continue to strive to provide excellent services to our clients.

Ontario region managers maintain close contact with their counterparts in Citizenship and Immigration through regular meetings and work closely with area MPs, travel agents and others assisting Canadians who travel.

The *Central Region*, with offices in Ottawa and Hull as well as mail operations, Official Travel, Certificates of Identity and Refugee Travel Documents, issued 298,598 passports. Central Operations faced two significant obstacles this year. One was the postal strike late in 1997 which affected mail operations, and the other was the ice storm. For the mail strike, applications that became caught in the mail were handled as “urgent” as soon as they were received. Strike procedures were put into place to solve the operational problems that arose from the postal strike, and worked quite well. During the ice storm, a core team of personnel staffed the 1-800 number and dealt with urgent cases. Both situations were handled quite admirably.

Preparations were also made for the decentralization, on a pilot basis, of Certificate of Identity operations.

Central Operations played the lead role in the development and implementation of the two main alliance initiatives involving the Passport Office in 1997-98: the Citizenship and Immigration Canada/Passport Office Cooperation Project and the Canada Post Project. The results of these initiatives will be discussed later in the report in the section of “Other Departments and Governments”.

CORPORATE SERVICES SUMMARIES

Internally, our organization implemented several new initiatives. The Secretariat looked at many initiatives to improve internal efficiency, while the release of the strategic plan helped to identify our core competencies. The release of an innovative Strategic Plan made us well aware of the importance of understanding our environment, our applicants, our people and our abilities in order to ensure our success. Surveys and environmental scans produced hard data regarding services, and implementation of the “New Public Management Principles” resulted in our ability to measure less quantifiable skills such as planning and innovation.