



Mandate

The Passport Office is authorized by the Secretary of State for External Affairs to administer all matters pertaining to the issuing, revoking, withholding, recovery and use of Canadian passports. It provides guidance to missions issuing passports abroad and administers all matters relating to Canadian travel documents. (See Appendix A: The Canadian Passport Order.)

The primary aim of the Passport Office is to offer Canadians the best passport service feasible. To do this, the Office must deliver passports to the public as efficiently as possible, provide passports that are internationally respected for their authenticity and security, and operate in a cost-effective manner.

Special Operating Agency Status

The Passport Office is a Special Operating Agency (SOA) of External Affairs and International Trade Canada (EAITC), one of the first five such agencies created by the government in 1990. The creation of SOAs was intended to encourage governmental efficiency and improve the focus on client services. Under this initiative, departmental service delivery units receive increased management flexibility in return for demonstrably improved levels of performance and results.

As an SOA the Passport Office is committed to maintaining economy, efficiency and effectiveness. It must find ways to enhance its products and services and must meet rigorous standards of security.

The Passport Office Advisory Board was established in 1991. The Board consists of seven members including representatives from EAITC, central agencies, other Special Operating Agencies, Crown corporations and the private sector. (See Appendix E.)

The Board meets twice a year to provide strategic advice to the Chair of the Advisory Board concerning initiatives proposed by the Chief Operating Officer; and to review and recommend for approval the corporate plans of the Passport Office, including the Framework Document and the Business Plan.

The Framework Document is the charter of the Agency and outlines the general operating principles and accountability of the Passport Office. It also defines the reporting relationship with EAITC.

The Business Plan is prepared annually. It identifies the business goals and objectives to be met in the fiscal year and outlines strategies for achieving them, including required resources. The Plan is reviewed by the Advisory Board and approved by the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The Annual Report describes the major activities undertaken by the Office and gives an accounting of its financial situation over the preceding fiscal year. It is presented to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. This is the second Annual Report to be presented by the Passport Office.

The Framework Document, the Business Plan and the Annual Report meet the special reporting requirements of an SOA. In addition, the Passport Office prepares a Strategic Plan which outlines its long-term objectives and strategies.

Organization

The Passport Office is geographically dispersed with a central administration in the National Capital Region, and four regional Operations: Central, Eastern, Ontario and Western. At the end of the 1991-92 fiscal year, there were 23 passport issuing offices across the country from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Victoria, British Columbia. The Chief Operating Officer, four directors and 19 managers operated from Headquarters, and there were three directors and 23 managers in the regional offices.