

A number of foreign guests from Japan, Taiwan, Yemen, and Russia toured Passport Operations. Central Operations represented Canada at the 1993 meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization's working group on machine-readable travel documents. The purpose of this ongoing working group is to refine document specifications to facilitate international travel and improve security.

The Official Travel section was involved in designing a passport tracking system to improve and clarify the custodial responsibilities for holding and exchanging official passports.

On March 3, we celebrated the success of 30 employees who have been with the Passport Office for 20 years.

### Western Operations

Quality of Service initiatives were introduced in the Western region in 1992-93; in 1993-94, they have been under continuous improvement. This includes a client survey and an updated Quality of Service Plan based on input from clients and employee focus groups. Eighty per cent of clients reported that Western region offices displayed "excellent

employee courtesy." The overall level of service received a rating of excellent by 70 per cent of the respondents. All offices receive copies of the survey which they analyze with respect to their customer service.

To provide better service to our clients and improved working conditions for our valued employees, two offices were renovated and a third office was relocated to more appropriate and client-friendly accommodation.

As part of the Western region's Communications Plan, introduced in 1992-93, Passport Office information kits are sent to members of Parliament and members of the legislative assemblies as well as school groups and travel agencies. These low-cost kits, developed in-house, reflect the needs of the local communities where they are distributed. Regional offices participate in local and regional travel shows.

Employees are kept informed of changes and initiatives, and provided with ongoing training. The region has developed a video listing of training films; each regional office has a VCR on site. Regional management conference call minutes, an ad hoc regional newsletter, and customer comments on service are circulated to all employees.

Quality of service and quality of the working environment were enhanced by empowerment. Western region employees have been fully empowered except where policy changes are required. In principle, examiners are now empowered to take most decisions regarding passport issuance; this includes requests for urgent service. This front-line empowerment provides applicants with faster service.

The Technology Enhancement Plan (TEP) is being introduced in the



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