

QUIET HOUR EMERGENCIES

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Since consular emergencies do not always occur during normal office hours, consular posts make a variety of arrangements to ensure that assistance can be provided to a Canadian abroad suddenly overtaken by really serious trouble at night or on the weekend.

The best arrangements for meeting such situations are available at posts where there is 24-hour security guard service. The guards screen the calls for real emergencies and have a duty officer on whom they can call for assistance. Other methods for handling these situations include commercial telephone answering services, recorded messages to respond to telephone calls, recorded messages with a facility to record the caller's message, informing the appropriate local authorities of emergency telephone numbers, posting emergency numbers on the chancery door and insertion of emergency numbers in the telephone directory.

The Department has not attempted to prescribe varying standards for different posts, but has left the devising of suitable arrangements to the discretion of the head of post, who is in the best position to appreciate the needs at his location and to organize his personnel resources accordingly. A survey of post practices for handling quiet hour calls for help carried out by the Department in 1979 indicated that there was no requirement for a greater standardization of procedures.

REGIONAL PASSPORT OFFICES

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In handling the Canadian end of the consular workload, the Department receives important assistance from the regional passport offices (of which there will eventually be sixteen). All these offices are under the direct operational control of the Passport Office in Ottawa.

Since these offices were established, they have rendered certain consular services to Canadians in addition to the provision of passport services which is their *raison d'être*. Subject to the availability of staff, they provide the following supplementary services:

- a) Regional Offices accept from families of Canadians