



news release

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For release

NEW CANADIAN PASSPORT HAS ENHANCED SECURITY FEATURES

The Minister for Public Security Canada, the Honourable Doug Lewis, today announced the introduction of a new Canadian passport design with enhanced security features.

"This new design is the result of the Passport Office's commitment to strengthen the security of the document, reducing the possibility of fraud," said Mr. Lewis.

With the growing threat of international travel documentation fraud aided by image duplication equipment, such as colour laser copiers, the new passport design has added unique features that will counter illegal replication or alteration attempts.

Another feature will allow standard passport readers to detect bogus copies of the new design and assist inspection authorities at ports of entry to identify a forgery more readily.

The new passport design retains many elements of the preceding model -- for example the cover, size, and raised printing -- but significant differences exist with several innovations.

The passport pages of the new booklet are made from the most advanced passport security paper, produced and developed in Canada with an enhanced watermark design. Another characteristic of the new passport is the use of the perimeter page numbering system on the visa pages. Canada is believed to be the first country to introduce this feature to protect against visa page substitution. In addition, the security laminate on the identification page has been bolstered to deter counterfeiting and tampering.

"Technological advancements are happening quickly, and we must stay ahead of those who would abuse our system," added Mr. Lewis.

The new passports will be issued beginning August 27.

The Passport Office is a Special Operating Agency of Public Security Canada.

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Backgrounder

NEW PASSPORT DESIGN

Modifications to the Canadian passport design are fuelled by the Passport Office's desire to keep the document current with the latest security technologies to protect the integrity of the travel document and consequently the traveller, against the growing threat of fraud.

The Canadian passport is a world-class document, respected internationally, that meets the standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Canada is a regular participant at ICAO conferences and is looked to for leadership in the areas of new technology developments in passport design.

The development of the new passport design began with the manufacture of a new special paper, developed by a Canadian company in concert with the Passport Office Technologist, new and distinctive inks and colours, and improvements to the lamination technique. Like the previous model, this new passport can be read by passport machine readers at ports of entry around the world.

Canadians possessing a valid old-style passport need not worry that their passport will not be recognized. Such passports remain valid (five years from the date of issuance) until they expire. However, Canadians can apply for the new-style passport by submitting their old passport, an application form, the fee, and proof of citizenship. The old passport will be cancelled and returned with the new passport.

On August 27, Passport Offices across the country will begin issuing the new 24-page version passport, except for Passport Office operations in Hull. For environmental reasons, the Hull office will continue to issue the former style until that inventory runs out.