



March 8, 2002

RE: Guarantor Eligibility List

As you know, the policy on the guarantor process is a security measure designed to confirm the identity of an applicant. It helps the Passport Office verify information through an independent third party who has known the applicant for at least two years. The security of the Canadian passport depends, to a large extent, on the recommendation of the guarantor who personally knows the applicant and verifies the statements contained in the application and certifies one photograph as being a true likeness of that person.

The categories of guarantors, as listed on the application form, by virtue of their occupation, tend to be well known and represented collectively in every community across Canada to ensure that all applicants have reasonable access to a guarantor. It also allows the Passport Office to carry out the necessary security review and checks of the applicant and the guarantor with minimal cost and without disrupting rapid service.

The guarantor's occupation also facilitates the verification process. Passport Office staff are provided with association membership lists or other reference materials for rapid verification. The association, licensing body, or other agency may also be contacted directly for verification of the guarantor and may also serve as a point of departure for further investigation, if necessary. Occupational affiliation, therefore, assists the Passport Office in easily identifying and contacting guarantors.

The events in the United States on September 11, 2001 illustrate our concern in matters pertaining to safeguarding the security, integrity, and value of the Canadian passport to the holder. In December 2001, the Passport Office announced further enhanced background and guarantor checks as well as the development of a new application form which will include employment and residential history.

In the past, our policy on the acceptance of retired guarantors depended on whether they were in professions likely to have been occupied continuously throughout their working life without having taken another profession after retiring. As the new security measures have considerably added to the time required for examiners to complete the issuance of a passport, we are amending the guarantor eligibility list to include only those individuals whose names currently appear in the professional association membership listings to

which they belong. Therefore, retired professionals not holding association membership and whose names do not appear in the professional association membership listings to which they belong, regrettably can no longer act as passport guarantors.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who have assisted, and continue to assist, the Passport Office in delivering its services and to protect the integrity and reputation of the Canadian passport.

Yours sincerely,

Michael J. Hutton
Chief Executive Officer