

Consular Services Annual Report 2008/09

Delivering high quality support to British
Nationals abroad, in normal times and in crises



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

FOREWORD BY CHRIS BRYANT MP Minister for Consular Services



The FCO's consular service helps British Nationals in some of the most complex and often fragile of situations abroad.

Over the last financial year, the consular service provided assistance to almost 35,000 British nationals abroad, and dealt with close to 2.1 million assistance enquiries. They issued almost 11,000 emergency passports to people whose passport had been lost or stolen, responded to nearly 7,000 cases where Brits had been detained, and provided assistance on just under 200 new parental child abduction cases. The consular service's Rapid Deployment Teams were deployed 11 times to assist our nationals caught up in global crises, from the earthquake in China to the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

The consular service is funded by a fee levied on every passport. For around £1.50 a year, every British passport holder has at their disposal a global network of professionals who often provide the first line of support when things go wrong. More information about the services available can be found at fco.gov.uk/travel.

The consular service is funded by the public and is rightly accountable to the public. This Annual Report, which includes an assessment of performance against measurable service targets, is an important part of that accountability.

Whether they are successful is ultimately for you to judge. The consular service seeks constant feedback and is looking to improve its mechanisms for doing so. You can send your views to: feedback.consular.services@fco.gov.uk

Chris Bryant MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

INTRODUCTION



The 2008/09 financial year was a major year of activity for the FCO's consular operation.

Our staff assisted British nationals caught up in the earthquake in China, the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, and the airport emergency in Bangkok. 380,000

people required British passports from Embassies and Consulates across the world. Numerous British visitors relied on the commitment and planning of consular staff for an enjoyable and trouble free Olympics and Paralympics in Beijing. Hundreds of British nationals required assistance from our staff when forced into marriage against their will. And travellers, visiting and exploring every corner of the world, relied on our travel advice being up-to-date and relevant. In each of these cases, and many more, the provision of an effective service to our nationals overseas was our over-riding priority.

Alongside delivering our consular services as professionally as possible, we have continued to seek out efficiencies and savings. We plan to save £4.3m over the current financial year (2009/10) through the rationalisation of our overseas passport operation. Our consular assistance is funded through a £15 Consular Premium charged on all passport applications. This places us in a unique financial position, with a clear responsibility to British passport holders to deliver value-for-money services.

This report sets out our assessment of how we have performed over the last year – measured against challenging targets. We have also set out our financial position, including our income and expenditure, past, current and forecast.

Over the last year we have made considerable improvements to our management information, and hence our ability to assess our performance objectively and transparently. This helps ensure we are accountable to passport holders and stakeholders, while also able to identify best practice and address problems.

The last year has seen the successful delivery of a number of projects through the change programmes we established to professionalise consular services. The Global Response Centre was launched on 1 April 2009 to provide consistent and high-quality support 24/7 to British nationals all over the world. The rationalisation of the Europe, North America and

Australasia passport networks began. The Legalisation Office moved to two new sites better designed to serve its customers. The second stage of the rollout of our Consular Regional Director network was completed, significantly boosting our ability to manage our resources globally. The rollout of the on-line registration system for British nationals travelling and living overseas, LOCATE, was completed. And contracts were signed to introduce one of the world's most sophisticated emergency travel documents to help our nationals return home if their passport is lost or stolen. The professionalism of our training and communications teams, who have been at the heart of our change agenda, was recognised through several national awards over the year.

Significantly for our future, the FCO and the Home Office signed a Memorandum of Understanding to integrate the domestic and overseas passport networks over coming years. This will leverage new economies of scale and technologies for the UK's overseas passport customers.

We aim to provide the services our nationals need, where and when they need them, as professionally and cost-effectively as possible. We are now preparing our next three-year strategy to help us reach this goal. The current strategy focuses on professionalising our staff and processes. The next strategy, from 2010-13, will have the changing needs of our changing customer base – as well as the current economic realities – as its foundation. In the process we are surveying our customers, working with the Institute of Public Policy Research, and The Central Office of Information, consulting our stakeholders in the travel industry and civil society, and involving our front-line staff.

The consular service is committed to reform and change, and has delivered major improvements in the last year. Challenges remain: tailoring our operation to a period of declining income, rooting out inefficiencies, delivering major business change particularly in the passport operation without disrupting service, putting our resources where our customers are. While we are proud of our achievements, we are not complacent. There is still much we can do better. That remains our goal.

Julian Braithwaite
Director of Consular Services
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

OUR CORE SERVICES

ASSISTANCE

In 2008/09, we dealt with nearly 2.1 million consular assistance enquiries across the world. We provided support in over 3,100 hospitalisations, and dealt with over 5,500 deaths and nearly 7,000 detentions. Overall, we responded to 34,443 requests for assistance. The ten Countries below accounted for approximately two thirds of all requests for assistance around the world:

Spain, USA, France, Portugal, Thailand, Greece, Germany, Australia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey.

We have supported British nationals in all nature of overseas assistance. This has included forced marriage, child abduction and death penalty cases. The scale of the issues is clear: in April 2009, we were aware of just under 2,500 British nationals detained overseas, of whom 26 were on death row or facing charges attracting the death penalty. In the last year, our joint FCO/Home Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) received 1,200 reportings of possible forced marriage. And our Child Abduction Unit provided assistance on 196 new parental child abduction cases. It also continued to provide help on cases opened in previous years.

Despite the challenges, we have made progress in dealing with all three types of cases. The sentence of a British national facing the death penalty in Vietnam was commuted to life imprisonment, and another British national on death row in Malaysia was released after his conviction was overturned. The FMU dealt with hundreds of consular assistance cases, often involving direct action overseas and rescues, and many cases where a victim was being forced to sponsor a visa against their will. The FCO also agreed to operate the Hague Convention with three recent signatory countries, which will help secure the return of children taken overseas by one parent without the agreement of the other.

SUPPORT IN CRISES

A consular crisis can take many forms. Examples include a mass casualty/fatality incident, deterioration in law and order, or a significant incident involving British nationals.

Over the last year, we activated our crisis response mechanisms on 12 occasions. This included sending Rapid Deployment Teams (RDTs) based in London and Hong Kong to assist during crises in China (earthquake), Georgia/Armenia (Russian intervention), Cuba (Hurricane Ike), India (Mumbai terrorist attacks) and Thailand (civil unrest).

Specifically in Georgia, as the security situation deteriorated, RDTs were sent from London to Tbilisi and Yerevan. Travel advice was amended frequently throughout the crisis to keep British nationals abreast of developments. 48 eligible persons (British, EU, Commonwealth) benefitted from an assisted departure by bus from Tbilisi to Yerevan. These buses were met in Yerevan by an RDT who offered assistance with finding accommodation and onward travel. We liaised closely with EU and Colloque (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, US) partners throughout the crisis. 20 eligible persons benefitted from assisted departure organised by the French and German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

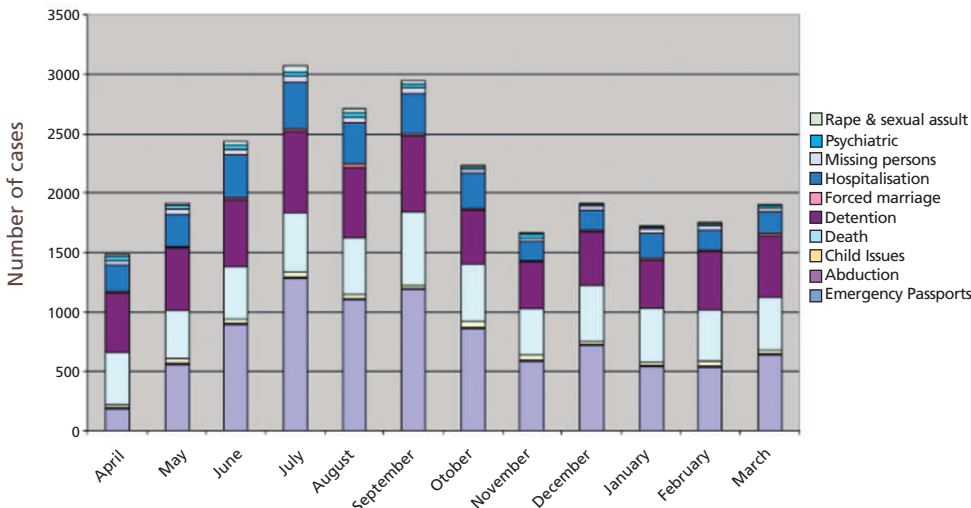
In addition to RDTs, crisis assets at our disposal include Emergency Response Teams (ERTs), Regional Resilience Networks (RRNs) and Consular staff working in the FCO's dedicated Crisis Centre.

RDTs consist of specialist trained crisis response volunteers who deploy from either London, Asia-Pacific region or the US to assist staff in country to offer consular assistance to British nationals. There are currently 160 trained RDT members worldwide. Depending on the needs of the crisis an RDT can deploy with members of the Red Cross, International SOS and police Disaster Victim Identification staff as required. ERTs are specialist trained FCO volunteers who respond to telephone calls from the public in a

crisis. They log details of potentially affected British nationals on the FCO registration system, LOCATE. There are currently 120 trained ERT members.

Over the last year, we have professionalised our crisis preparedness. For example, the use of trigger matrices in our Posts' contingency plans is now mandatory for all countries where there is a high or medium risk of a development that may lead to the evacuation of British

New Assistance Cases - 2008/09



nationals. This enables posts and London to better identify and prepare for periods of instability. Specifically, the key role of a triggers matrix is to show clearly and concisely the most likely political, economic and security-related developments in a country and how they are likely to impact on British nationals travelling or living there. Among the scenarios included will be those that, in the worst case, could necessitate the evacuation or departure of British nationals from a country. Liaison with the Ministry of Defence is therefore very important and an already thriving relationship has been further strengthened through joint involvement in evacuation exercises.

ADVICE AND INFORMATION

We helped British nationals help themselves via our online Travel Advice for 220 countries and territories. The website received more than 4.8 million hits in 2008/09, and we updated advice almost 4,000 times. Media coverage of the Know Before You Go campaign reached 64% of all UK adults on average 29 times. The campaign now has almost 300 partners who have helped it deliver travel safety messages to 29 million British nationals.

Each year we distribute over 9 million leaflets to the public. Last year's in-resort campaign 'Don't Be A Dick' won an Advertising Industry Communications award and a Foreign Secretary's award.

The external communications strategy has been set for the next year and is based on reaching those groups of travellers who cause disproportionate numbers of consular cases with targeted, tailored messages. There will be a special focus on the Football World Cup in South Africa, those visiting friends and family and the British Minority Ethnic community, with two new TV and one new radio adverts coming online.

PASSPORTS

In 2008/09 we issued 372,106 passports overseas from 120 of our overseas Posts. The majority of passports issued overseas are concentrated in ten Posts: Canberra, Paris, Hong Kong, Madrid, Pretoria, Wellington, Dusseldorf, Dubai, Ottawa and Washington, which since November 2008 issues full validity passports to British Citizens resident or visiting the United States and Canada. Our top ten passport issuing posts issued 267,910 in 2008/09, accounting for over two thirds (71%) of all passports issued across our overseas network.

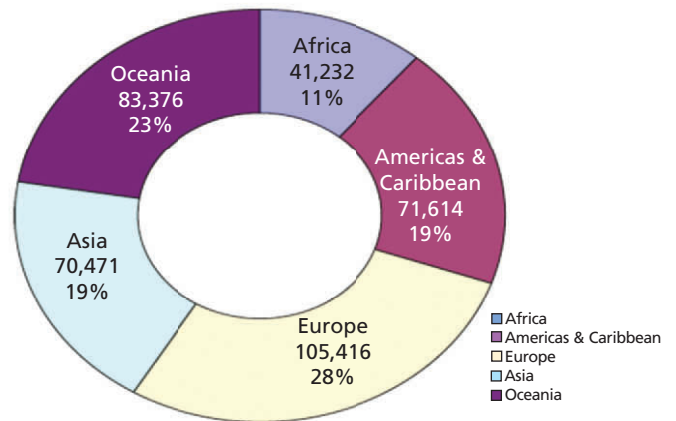
Since the peak in 2003/04 at around 453,000, the number of passports issued by the FCO overseas has dropped. However, in recent years there appears to be a 'levelling out' of passport demand.

Beneath the headline figure of 372,106 passports issued globally in 2008-09, there is a disparity amongst different regions. Passport demand in North America has fallen, whereas passport demand has risen slightly in Europe (after consecutive drops in the past two years) and risen markedly in Australasia, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. In previous years, passport demand in Hong Kong was on a continuous steep downward decline. 2008-09 is no different to previous years. Passport demand is still falling. Hong Kong issued 24,059 passports in 2008-09, a fall of 17% compared to the previous year.

In the Middle East, it is clear that the burgeoning business climate and the fact that many of the region's cities are becoming major transport hubs, is turning the Middle East and Gulf area into a major passport market.

The graph below sets out the number of passports we have issued overseas in the last year. There is a separate graph in the "Our Financial Position" chapter which highlights the total number of passports issued, both in the UK and overseas.

Passport Issued Overseas - 2008/09



OTHER DOCUMENTARY SERVICES

We issued more than 370,000 legalisation documents at our Legalisation Office in the UK. After deciding in October 2007 to move our Legalisation Office out of FCO main buildings, we opened on 8th August 2008 our new Legalisation Office in Milton Keynes, serving members of the public and handling all postal applications. As a result of the move, we have been able to improve the service we provide to our customers by reducing the business targets for handling postal applications from 10 working days to 24 hours. We have also opened a satellite Legalisation Office at Centre Point, central London, for handling business customers within 2 hours.

OUR STAFF

Over 2,000 FCO staff take part in consular work in London and across the world. The vast majority of our full-time consular staff overseas are employed locally, bringing their local skills, knowledge and contacts to bear for the benefit of British nationals.

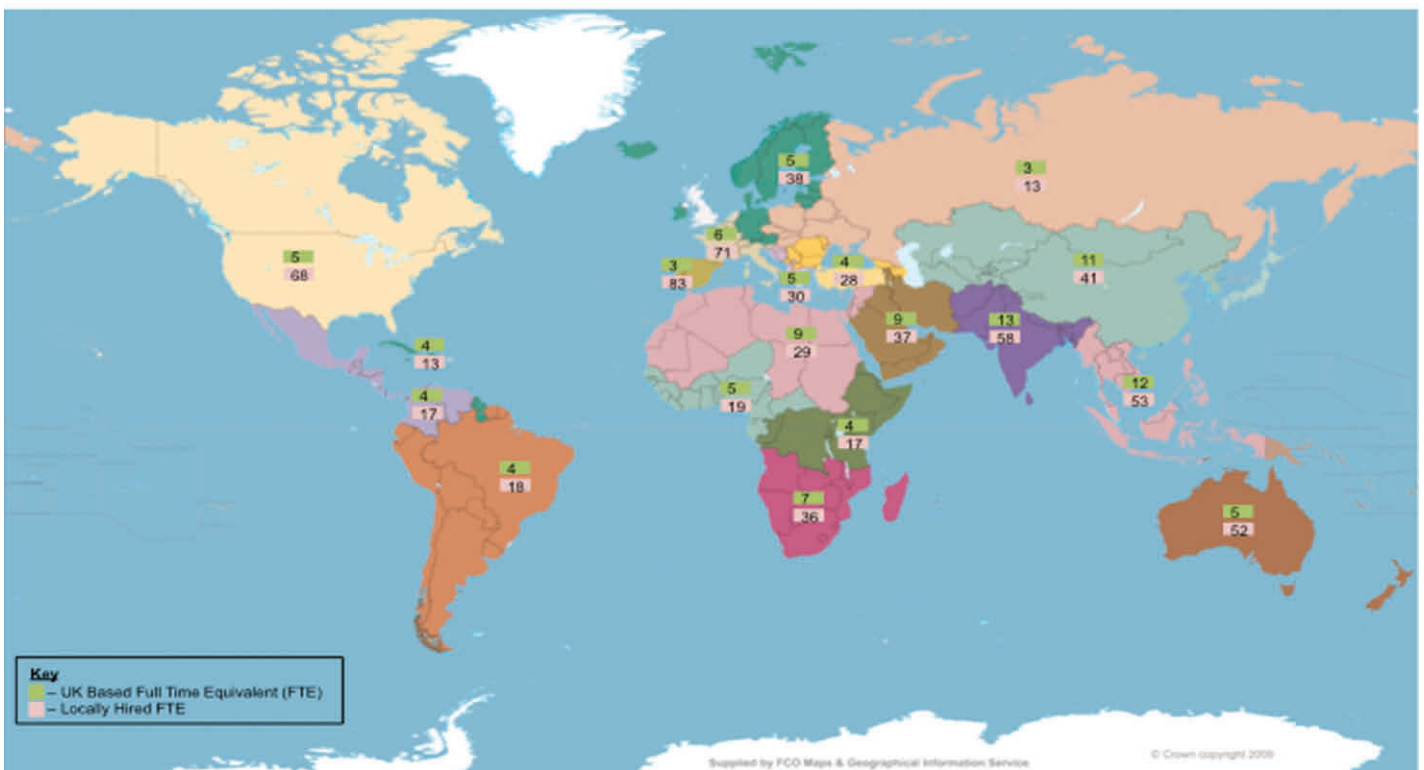
Over the last year, the number of UK-based FCO staff involved in consular work continued to fall from 1025 in 2007-8 to 998 in 2008-9, while the number of locally hired FCO staff increased from 1057 to 1266. This reflects the fact that we can improve the service we provide British nationals overseas while reducing the cost by hiring professionals locally rather than sending them out from the UK. We also have a network of 249 Honorary Consuls providing further support to British nationals, as well as extensive networks of consular assistants and wardens, many of them volunteers.

We ensure that all consular staff receive relevant training from a dedicated team of qualified consular trainers. This ensures that staff across the world are able to provide the same consistent, high-quality and professional service to British nationals wherever they are. We extend this training requirement to our Honorary Consuls and consular duty officers (non-consular officers undertaking consular work overseas during out-of-hours periods). Training is modular, and based on pass-fail examinations.

Every year, the FCO as a whole conducts a survey of the views of its staff. The results for consular staff were encouraging. 90% said that they 'were doing something worthwhile', while 92% said that they 'were happy to put in the extra effort when required'. And levels of commitment and engagement were equally positive – 77% of staff feeling 'engaged.' This compares favourably with the rest of the FCO, and reflects considerably higher levels of engagement than in comparable public or private sector organisations. The survey also highlighted a number of challenges: The continuing barriers between UK and locally employed FCO staff; the quality of line management; and issues surrounding bullying and harassment.

The Consular service is a people business in which our people are our greatest asset. We realise that in order to deliver the quality service we want to, supporting our staff and getting the most from them is vital. The survey illustrates a solid base of committed, motivated and talented staff. Yet it also illustrates challenges which managers are now focused on addressing and solving in the year ahead.

Regional numbers of full time equivalent Consular staff employed overseas



OUR FINANCIAL POSITION

FCO consular services are funded from fees not general taxation.

Our income is derived from the Consular Premium levied on all passport applications (which funds consular assistance overseas); the fees we charge for issuing passports overseas (which funds the FCO passport operation); and the fees we charge for other documentary services such as Legalisation (which funds the provision of these documentary services).

As with other fee-funded public services, we are required by the Treasury to balance our expenditure against our income. This includes the recovery of past deficits in future fees. The improvement in our management information has given us a better understanding of what drives changes in our costs, in particular those allocated from central FCO accounts. This has put us in a better position to set fees more strategically; and to bear down on remaining inefficiencies in our operations.

The chart below sets out our income and expenditure from 2006-7 to 2010-11. The income forecast for 2009-10 was based upon data available in December 2008. They do not reflect the most recent impact of the economic downturn.

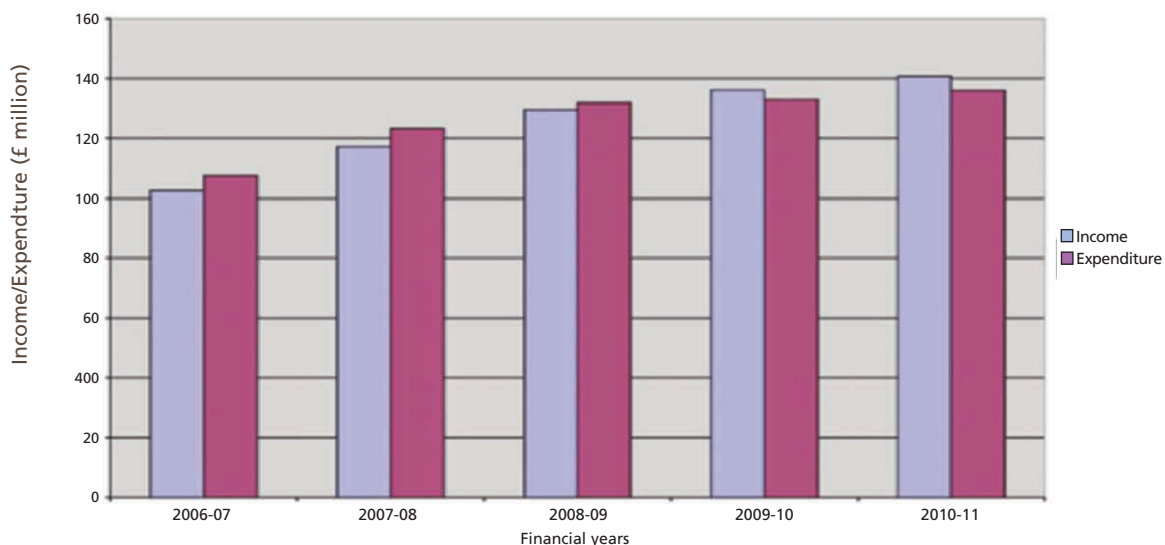
EFFICIENCIES AND COST SAVINGS

The consular service can balance its books two ways. By raising fees, and by cutting costs. Before we consider the former, we have a duty to drive through the latter. This has become even more important as the country and British nationals continue to face economic difficulties.

Over the last year we made the following savings:

- Projects forming part of the Consular Strategy Programme and the Passports NG Programme returned almost £2 million of unused funds to the Consular Resources Group.
- Deletion of two locally employed positions in the Iberia network through joining the global response centre, saved £81,000 per year.
- The Know Before You Go preventive messaging campaign achieved an average return on investment of 20:1. This compares to a commercial standard of 10:1. *
- The rebranding and adoption of standard guidelines, for FCO publications, will make a saving of £10,000 in 2009/10 and a further £25,000 saving over the next five years for the production of the main Consular guidance booklets (which inform and assist UK travellers going overseas).
- The roll-out of credit card payment systems to posts resulted in stream-lining of accounting procedures and saving staff time.

Income & Expenditure for the years 2006-7 to 2010-11



*The figure is calculated through assessing the total amount of media coverage the campaign received, and working out the equivalent advertising costs of this coverage. This cost is then calculated against the campaign's actual cost.

- Consular Regional Directors are successfully encouraging staff to take economy flights where possible. While it is not possible to put a precise figure, the Regional Director in South Asia estimates that this saved at least £30,000 in 2008/09.
- Restructuring of Malaga, Lisbon and Portimao through reviews and dealing with performance issues resulted in savings of £102,000 per year.

Over the next two years, we are projected to make the following savings:

- £4.3m in 2009-10 and a further £3.3m in 2010-11 from further rationalisation of the overseas passport network
- Savings of £600,000 in 2009-10 in the Legalisation Office staff budget

CONSULAR FEES

We set consular fees annually through a Parliamentary Statute. Our goal is to break even under each of our three accounts (Assistance, Passports, and Other Documentary Services) including carrying forward surpluses and deficits from previous years. The difficulty of accurately predicting income and expenditure (much of which is attributed to consular from central budgets and thus not known until year-end) sometimes requires us to cross-subsidise between these accounts, in consultation with HM Treasury. Each year we review efficiencies before making recommendations to Ministers for adjusting consular fees for the coming year, which are then submitted to Parliament.

Based upon the financial data summarised above, a review of fees and charges resulted in an increase of 4.25% to overseas passport fees, 2.75% to legalisation and 6% to other consular fees for 2009-10. Where possible, we aim only to increase fees by the rate of inflation. This has not been possible across the board this year. In order to reduce historical deficits we have had not only to push through the efficiencies described above but also to increase some fees. The depreciation of the pound has meant that our costs (most of which are overseas) have gone up by 10-20% in many markets. A new Emergency Travel document is also being introduced in 2009-10 at a cost of £89. This is a much more secure product in line with international standards; but it is also a more sophisticated and expensive one.

The full Consular Fees table is displayed in all Embassies and Consulates. See a copy on the FCO website at the following link:
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/3052790/14977181/consular-fees-180309>

INNOVATE AND SAVE

As highlighted above, the majority of our income for consular services comes from a £15 Consular Premium levied on every passport application. The continued fall in passport sales (see graph page nine), combined with the difficult economic situation more generally, is therefore going to present challenges for our income in the years ahead. The introduction of Identity Cards will also affect the consular premium: we are currently in discussions with Identity and Passport Service to extend the Consular Premium to those cards that will serve as travel documents. The need to innovate, achieve value for money and seek out efficiencies is going to become all the more vital and will be at the heart of our 2010-13 Consular Strategy.

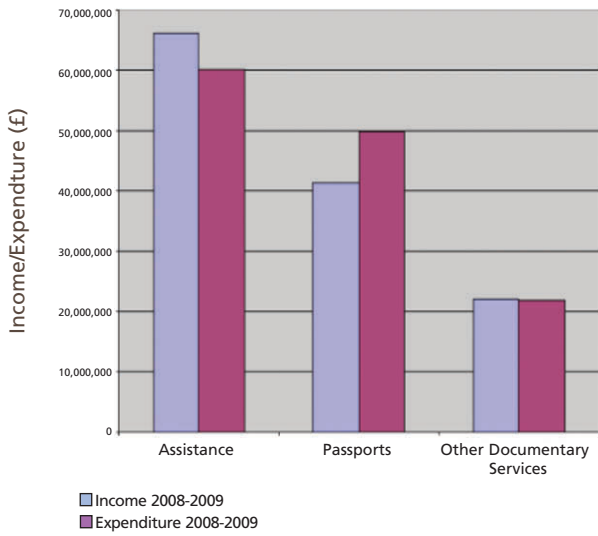
INCOME & EXPENDITURE

The financial position reported is the latest information we have for full costs and income. 2008-09 to 2010-11 reflects forecast data. The new fees are reflected in income from April 2009 and an inflation increase for the Consular Premium has been forecast in 2010-11. Following the fee review, the deteriorating economic environment has contributed to falling income volumes across the business. It is likely that Consular could suffer a fall in income of up to 11% over financial years 2009-10 and 2010-11. Mitigation strategies need to be developed over the next few months, and both London and the consular network need to be fully engaged in the process.

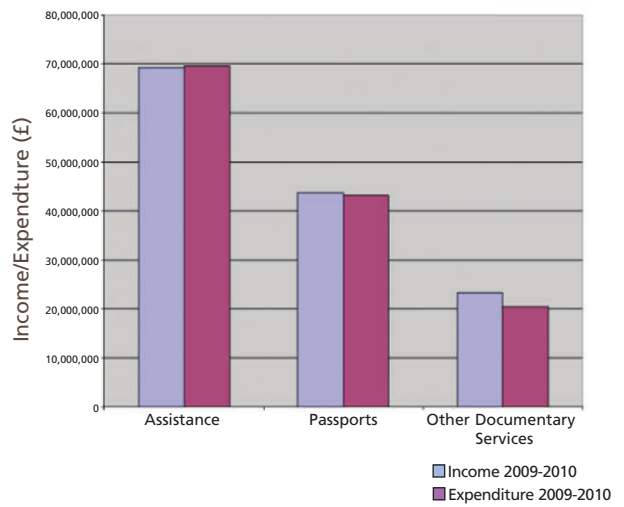
We break our expenditure down into our three distinct business areas: Assistance work overseas; overseas passport operation; delivery of other fee bearing services. We cover our expenditure for assistance work through the £15 Consular Premium (on all passports, both overseas and those issued in the UK), plus income from issuing Temporary and Emergency Passports overseas. The income we receive from the overseas passport fee covers the cost of our overseas passport operations. And we meet the costs of our other fee bearing services through generating income from these services, the biggest of which is the legalisation of documents.

The graphs on page nine sets out how we have performed in each of these three business areas. There is also a graph highlighting the number of passports issued in the UK and overseas. As the bulk of our incomes comes from the Consular Premium levied on all passports, the number of passport applications directly affects our income.

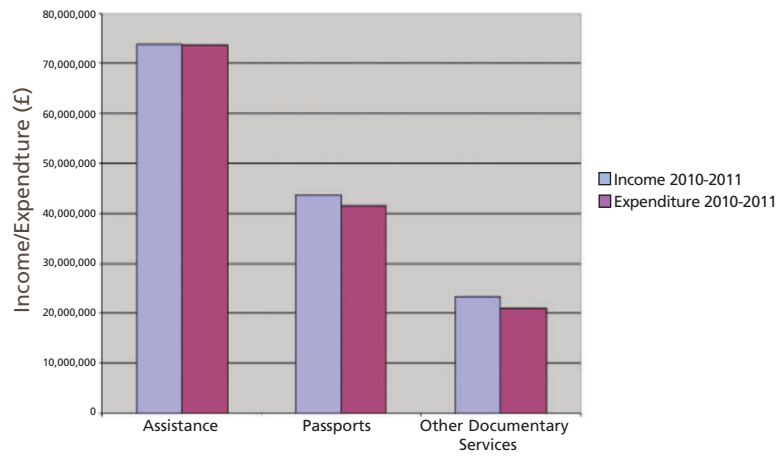
2008-2009 Income & Expenditure



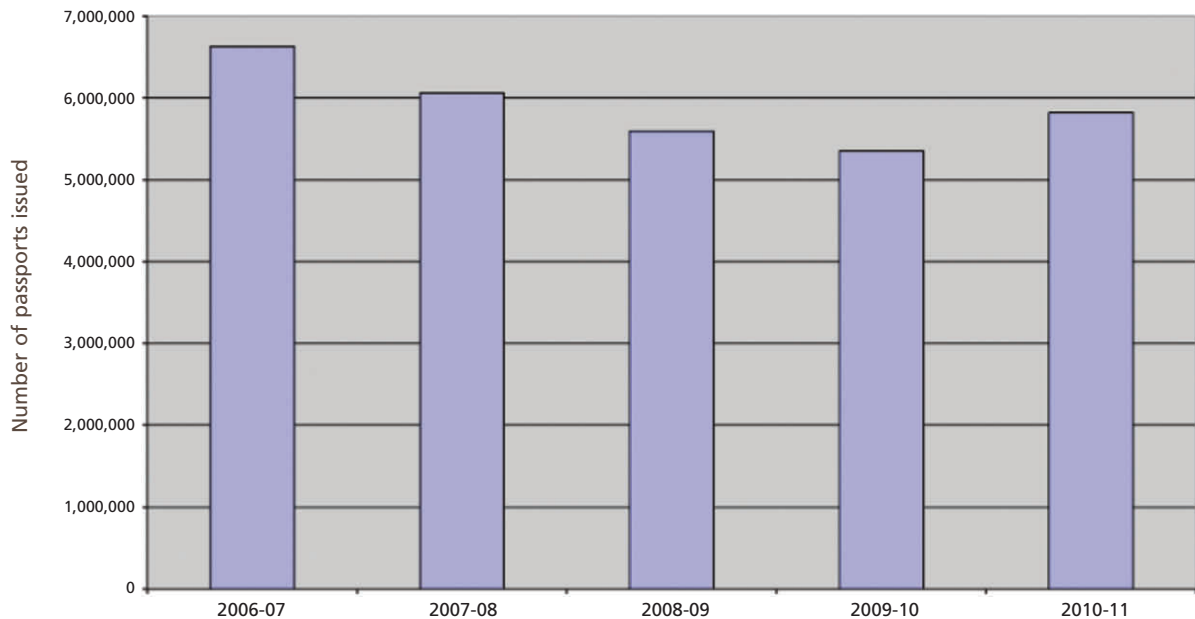
2009-2010 Income & Expenditure



2010-2011 Income & Expenditure



Passport issued UK and Overseas combined



OUR CHANGE PROGRAMMES

Three times as many British nationals travel overseas today than when the Berlin Wall came down in 1989. One million British nationals live all or part of the year in Spain. The consular service continues to change in response to the impact that globalisation has had on the way British nationals travel and live. We are delivering these changes through two major change programmes – Passports Next Generation and the Consular Strategy Programme. From next year we will also be introducing our new strategy that will guide our change programmes for the next three years.

PASSPORTS PROGRAMME

The Passports Next Generation Programme is responsible for modernising the UK's overseas passport network. A number of key projects have been delivered over the last year. The Authentication by Interview project has been successfully rolled out and two more (introduction of state-of-the-art Emergency Travel Documents (ETD) and rationalisation of the overseas network) are running on time. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Home Office in April 2009 to integrate the domestic and overseas passport operations enables us to press ahead with a joint project to manage the integration of the home and overseas passport networks and the centralisation of passport production in the UK by April 2011. The coming year promises to be both challenging but dynamic with the ETD, Rationalisation and Integration projects all reaching significant milestones.

The Rationalisation Project was set up in May 2008 to achieve efficiency savings and streamline the business, one of the recommendations in the 2007 National Audit Office Report. We will reduce the number of passport issuing posts from over 90 to 20 by the end of 2010. Following extensive analysis Madrid and Paris became the passport production centres for Iberia and Western Europe. Washington is now the production centre for North America and Dusseldorf began processing applications from Austria and posts in South East Europe in March 2009. We took an important but difficult decision to locate the passport operation for Australasia in Wellington rather than Canberra. Work is now underway to prepare Wellington to become our biggest passport issuing post.

Over the next year rationalisation will continue in: Australasia; the Caribbean, Central and South America; Northern, Central and Southern Europe; Southern Africa; the Gulf, Near East and North Africa and South East Asia. Consular Regional Directors across the network continue to work with the project to identify the best locations for production centre

and the quickest, most secure methods for receiving applications and distributing passports to customers. Engaging posts early on in the project has been critical to its success, making difficult or radical decisions easier to implement.

BRIDGE is the name of the system for issuing the new Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) from August 2009. The past year has seen the system and the ETD itself being designed and built from scratch with front line consular staff playing a key role in the process. The new document will enable British nationals overseas who have lost their passports or had them stolen to travel home, or to a place of safety in an emergency. The International Civil Aviation Organisation have indicated the new British ETD has the potential to become the world standard. Over the next year ETDs will be rolled out to all posts and designated Honorary Consuls. The rollout of the new system and document will be underpinned by a comprehensive training and communication strategy.

Following the signature of the MOU with the Home Office in April 2009, integration of the FCO and IPS passport operations will increasingly dominate all the Programme's activities. In addition to informing the rationalisation process, it will also affect our plans for rolling out the next generation of passport issuing systems overseas (known as BRIDGE II). Over the next year we will agree a Transition Plan with IPS up to and beyond April 2011 when IPS takes control of the overseas network; begin negotiating the Service Level Agreements that will govern detailed management issues; and explore opportunities for greater collaboration between delivery partners.

The Programme aims to spend approximately £29 million from 2008-11 to complete these projects, roll out the next generation of passport issuing systems, and integrate the overseas network into a single UK passport network overseen by the Home Office's IPS. Contingency plans have been discussed and are being drawn up to take account of the current economic situation.

An Office of Government Commerce Review of the Programme conducted in November 2008 highlighted the progress that has been made over the last two years, awarding the programme an amber/green rating (the previous rating in March 2007 had been red). The Review found that "a strong and professional approach to programme management is in place and operating effectively" with "clear evidence of significant achievement against the overall plan" and "a high level of confidence by stakeholders that the programme will deliver the desired outcome."

STRATEGY PROGRAMME

The Consular Strategy Programme is responsible for improving the professionalism of our consular services. It has focused on raising standards of service, consistently and efficiently across the world.

Significant developments over 2008-9 include:

- The launch of the Global Response Centre on 1 April 2009 to provide high-quality and consistent out-of-hours support to British nationals around the world 24/7, 365 days a year
- New training based around roles/skills in UK and Overseas. Pass/fail training extended to all staff. International accreditation for the FCO's consular customer care qualification
- Improved online services including more forms available for public use online, improvements to Post websites, installation of stand-alone PCs in some consular waiting rooms for customers
- SMS messaging to British nationals overseas to support consular crisis response
- Appointing 6 more Consular Regional Directors with 14 in place overall to promote consistency, share best practice and allocate resources within regions.
- The rollout of credit card payment facilities to another 30 more FCO posts overseas
- A new system of Management Information based on activity recording across the network
- Sustainable systems to drive up consistency and share best practice within their region established in 30 countries.

Over the next year, we plan to:

- Expand the Global Response Centre to cover most of the FCO's global network
- Extend the number of posts able to accept payment by credit/debit card, and introduce an e-payments facility to enable online payments
- Create a Strategic Workforce Plan to help us ensure we have the right staff in the right places in the longer term
- Continue to make improvements and services more accessible through the Consular Service Delivery Improvements Project
- Consolidate the governance around the use of IT within Consular Directorate to maximise use of resources and new technology
- Finalise the appointment of the four remaining Consular Regional Directors
- Further training developments to maximise use of resources and improve professionalism
- Continue to work with Consular Regional Directors, helping them establish sustainable systems to ensure consistency in our consular services.

The Programme has an expected expenditure of just

over £2m (£2,230,000) over the 3 years (2007-2010). So far, the Programme has spent £1,575,000.

An Office of Government Commerce Gateway Review in November 2008 expressed confidence in the Programme and considered it on track to achieve its objectives. The Programme was given an amber rating and received praise for its practical approach to programme management, good communications and being benefits focussed: "The track record of success in 2008 augurs well for the future and very much reflects the individual strength and commitment of the key players. The programme's comprehensive approach to communications and change management will help ensure the work remains on track."

POST-2010 STRATEGY

The next three year Consular Strategy (April 2010 – March 2013) will build on the achievements of the current strategy, and identify further opportunities to innovate the consular operation. The current strategy focuses on driving up professionalism, following the National Audit Office's report of 2005. The next strategy will have the changing needs of customers, and the realities of the current economic situation, at its heart.

Consular Directorate has commissioned two external pieces of research to help develop more detailed customer insights. This is in line with the Capability Review objectives of a civil service which is better at understanding its future challenges and can meet them efficiently and effectively.

The research will increase understanding of who is likely to require consular assistance overseas in the future, what services they will require and how those services should be delivered beyond 2010. A comprehensive customer evidence base will help develop a strategy which delivers a consular service which:

- Reflects the changing nature, needs and destinations of our customer base
- Delivers a consular network focussed on modern consular assistance, following the merger of the passport network with the Identity and Passport Service after April 2011
- Is flexible and responsive, making best use of available resources
- Consolidates the benefits we have achieved in the last three years

OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Our partnerships, and our wider relationships with stakeholders in the travel industry and civil society, will continue to be essential for the delivery of consular services. Indeed they are likely to become even more important as we look for new ways to provide new services, often indirectly.

PARLIAMENT

The consular service has a special responsibility to Parliament. Parliament approves our fees. And we support MPs in the performance of constituency duties, helping FCO Ministers answer 864 MP letters in 2008/09 (of which we responded to 80% in 10 working days or less). To raise awareness about the services we provide, we have developed an MPs Handbook containing details of how to get in touch with us on specific consular issues. Separately we will publish a Forced Marriage booklet to give MPs information and facts on forced marriage and explain what they should do if they are approached by/or have any concerns about their constituents. In developing both these publications we consulted MPs throughout the process. We look forward to working more closely with MPs on consular issues in the future.

STAKEHOLDER PANEL

The Consular Stakeholder Panel is our main forum for engaging with partners and stakeholders and meets twice a year. It brings together Consular Directorate's external stakeholders to discuss issues of common interest. The Panel is split into two groups – the Travel Industry and NGOs. Travel Industry stakeholders include the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA); the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO); the Association of National Tourist Office Representatives (ANTOR). NGO stakeholders include the Red Cross; Prisoners Abroad; Fair Trials International; Reunite; Reprieve; and the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO).

We upgraded the Panel following extensive consultation with its members in October 2008. The new format is better focussed on our shared interests and has received positive feedback from partners. We will continue to use the Panel to consult stakeholders on consular services and policies.

PARTNERSHIPS IN THE UK

Many NGO partners are well placed to help British Nationals. For example we work closely with Reprieve on death penalty cases, and have daily contact with Reunite on child abduction cases. We frequently alert ABTA to changes we make to the FCO travel advice. We also work with a range of NGOs and charities on issues such as forced marriage. In early 2008 we launched the Forced Marriage NGO Forum which now meets every three or four months. This is well attended by a cross section of UK NGOs. In 2008 a key function of the Forum was to help the FCO/Home Office Forced Marriage Unit to design its 2009-2010 Action Plan.

Partnerships have also played a key role in our response to consular crises. We have signed a Disaster Victim Identification protocol with the Police. The Red Cross and International SOS (ISOS) are contracted to join Rapid Deployment Teams overseas during consular crises. The Red Cross can provide emotional support and ISOS assesses the medical care available. And we share information and best practice with foreign ministries across the world – through weekly teleconferences with Colloque partners (US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) and the EU Council Working Group on Consular Affairs (COCON) every two months.

We have built partnerships with around 300 Travel Industry organisations on the 'Know Before You Go' campaign, which aims to help British people to prepare for trips overseas so that they stay safe and healthy. Through these partnerships we have conveyed key messages in innovative ways: Working with Club 18-30s and 2wentys to convey our messages to their customers in resort via posters, address cards, beach balls and beer mats; distributing 52,000 of our 'Driving Abroad' leaflets on ferries from UK ports; and linking our travel pages on the BBC Weather and Met Office websites.

PARTNERSHIPS OVERSEAS

Overseas, we have worked with partners to provide a high quality and joined up service to British residents overseas. The Iberia network launched an innovative partnership approach with the Department of Work and Pensions, Age Concern and the Royal British Legion to support vulnerable British residents, especially those hit by the economic crisis. The partnerships work involves an outreach programme which includes regular roadshows aimed at providing tailored advice and support on benefits entitlements, navigating the Spanish social security system and signposting to organisations who can provide further guidance. We are working to replicate this model elsewhere.

SHARING RESOURCES

Recognising the assistance our partners provide in delivering consular services, we in turn support several of our partners. In 2008-9 we provided core funding to Prisoners Abroad and Reunite. We gave a grant to Reprieve to help fund their work supporting British nationals facing the death penalty. We provided project specific funding to the Lucie Blackman Trust, Hostage UK and International Social Services. In 2008 we piloted a forced marriage project fund for NGO activities in the UK. Given the success of this we plan to continue this fund in 2009. We also fund local partners overseas, for example in Pakistan we part fund an NGO that runs a refuge.

Since 2002 we have worked in partnership with Prisoners Abroad to provide them and Consular Directorate with specialist human rights advice. Under this arrangement the Human Rights Adviser works in Consular Directorate for nine days in a fortnight, and on the tenth day they are based at Prisoners Abroad. In 2008 we adopted a similar approach to expanding our access to professional social work advice, with two new advisers added to our team working in partnership with Heathrow Travel Care.

PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS GOVERNMENT

Within Government, we continue to work closely with the IPS, following agreement with the Home Office, to transfer ownership of the overseas passport operation to IPS by 2011 (see "Our Change Programmes" section). We continue to contribute via the National Identity Scheme Management Board and its sub-committees, to the design and procurement of new systems and processes to support the National Identity Scheme and the development of the next generation of UK passports.

We work jointly with the Ministry of Justice on Prisoner Transfers and Child Abduction issues. Consular Directorate hosts the joint FCO/Home Office Forced Marriage Unit. This is a jointly staffed, jointly funded unit and covers both international and domestic aspects of forced marriage work. In 2008 the Unit ran a full public consultation resulting in the November launch of new multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage. The Unit works closely with the Ministry of Justice, Department for Children Schools and Families, Department of Health, UK Borders Agency, the Police and other agencies.

We continue to have a regular dialogue with UK Borders Agency on the impact of changes to any overseas positions, which have a dual visa/consular function.

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PUBLIC

Our Consular Guide (Support for British Nationals Abroad) is our 'contract' with the public. It outlines what services we can and can't provide for British nationals abroad (see page 22) and how we aim to deliver those services. We are constantly looking at ways to ensure that our services meet the needs of the public.

We collect feedback from the public through our consular satisfaction questionnaires. These are specifically aimed at detainees, people who receive assistance from us and those who have used our passport or notarial services. We also monitor closely the complaints and praise that we receive. We are currently reviewing the process for ensuring that all the public feedback we receive is used to inform the development of our policies and procedures.

RISKS AND MITIGATION

The consular service has developed a professional risk management process as part of the mainstreaming of Programme and Project Management across all our work.

This table sets out the key risks we identified for 2008-9. Clear mitigation strategies are in place and this table outlines the action we have taken.

We have given a green rating for where a risk exists, but is non-threatening. An amber risk indicates a risk requiring urgent attention, with moderate but significant impact on delivering services or meeting objectives. And a red risk identifies those risks that need urgent action, with potentially severe consequences if not addressed. They could cause critical impact on achievement of objectives and/or delivery of services.

Risk	Rating: Red/Amber/Green	Action Taken
<p>The Consular network is unable to respond to or mobilise resources to meet</p> <p>a) a rise or shift in demand globally or in specific areas. Or b) a non-crisis event (eg an airline goes out of business leaving passengers stranded)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful launch of Global Response Centre to deal with out-of-hour calls. • Greater use of partnerships to deliver services. • Framework for Exceptional Operations is being drawn up. • Strategic Workforce Plan project will assess consular resources. • Network Design Project – Regional resilience networks set up to help with surges in demand. • Management Information project – delivered improved system to assess trends. • Consular Service Delivery Improvements (CSDI) – use of virtual services.
<p>Public expectations rise higher and create irresistible pressure to provide more resource intensive assistance which we cannot afford from existing funding arrangements</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Behaviour Abroad Report published 12 Aug 08. Wide media coverage. • Revised consular guide • KBYG - focus research on target audience (Mar 09) • Customer based research to develop 2010 strategy. • CSDI project - online services, increasing efficiency. • Consistency framework
<p>Fall in revenues due to drop in fees both in the UK (IPS - Consular premium) and overseas</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget review process underway to balance priorities with resources • Rationalisation of passport operation to reduce overheads has begun. • Close monitoring of FCO Consular income to spot trends. • Consular Regional Directors to work with Post to draw up contingency plans for efficiencies.

Risk	Rating: Red/Amber/Green	Action Taken
<p>Cost of maintaining the overseas passport operation is excessive and becomes unsustainable</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU with IPS signed by Permanent Under Secretary (April 09). The FCO will transfer ownership of the overseas passport operation to IPS in 2011. • 08/09: Rationalisation of passport operation.
<p>A major consular crisis or aggravation in the global terrorist threat to which we cannot respond effectively or within the limits of our resources, leads to loss of effectiveness in other areas of our work as resources are diverted</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis leadership training for Heads of Mission and Heads of Departments in London. (This is now mandatory) • Core high risk countries identified. Exercises carried out to test system. • Crisis risk adequately represented and resourced in all country business plans. • Highly credible travel advice and communications campaigns to make travellers aware of the risks. • Internal audit of central contingency planning processes completed. Recommendations implemented. • Crisis risk adequately represented and resourced in all country business plans.
<p>Inability to make change stick in our overseas network or achieve full realisation of the benefits</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are involved in development of 2010 Strategy. • Coordination with Change Unit to ensure change fits in with wider FCO plans. • Consular change agent conferences.
<p>Future shape of FCO network overseas provides inadequate platform for delivering consular services</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Workforce Plan project to assess future resources. • Network Design project – regional resilience networks.
<p>There is a risk that personal data (assistance/passport related) is compromised through loss/theft -</p> <p>a) held by Hon Cons/non- firecrest posts and/or</p> <p>b) during transit between posts</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tighter SLAs with commercial partners/couriers employing OGC Guidance. • Guidance on data handling sent out to honorary Consuls. • Mandatory e-learning package “Protecting Information” for all staff.
<p>There is a risk of theft/loss of blank passport documents/books during shipment between UK and posts and from non-FCO posts</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent audit on delivery process - Olive Review recommendations are being implemented.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST OUR 2008-9 OBJECTIVES

The 2008-9 objectives of the consular service, and in particular of the FCO's Consular Directorate in London, are set out in the 2008-9 DSO3 (support for British nationals abroad) Business Plan. The business plan follows the four main pillars of the 2007-10 Consular Strategy: Professionalism of Staff; Quality of Service; Consistent Service; and Efficiency of Service. The following tables set out our assessment against our objectives under each of these headings, based on the key Performance Indicators that allow us to track our key service delivery targets.

PROFESSIONALISM OF STAFF: TRAINED STAFF AND WELL MANAGED STAFF

Overall Assessment		Amber
	Performance Target	Actual Performance
Delivery of Service	100% of consular staff trained within last four years	Since February 2008, the Consular Balanced Score Card (BSC) data shows a steady overall increase from 73% to 87% in March 2009.
	100% of consular duty officers trained within last four years	Since February 2008, the Consular BSC data shows a steady overall increase from 70% to 86% in March 2009.
	100% of Honorary Consuls received training within last four years	Since February 2008, the Consular BSC data shows a steady increase from 73% to 80% in March 2009.
	100% of heads of post Crisis Leadership trained	Since February 2008, the Consular BSC data shows a steady increase from 60% to 84% in March 2009.
	100% of consular staff with learning and development plans in place	Over the last financial year, the Consular BSC data shows a steady increase from 86% to 94% in March 2009.
	100% of staff had appraisal in last year	Over the last financial year, the Consular BSC data shows a slight increase to 95% in March 2009. The metric has been modified for the next financial year to take into account probationary staff that may not have had an appraisal yet.
	Role based training delivered from April 2008; pass/fail training introduced for London frontline staff	Completed on time.
Delivery of Capability	Authentication by Interview training rolled out to network by January 2009	Completed on time.
	Framework for Consular Regional Directors (CRDs) agreed and 80% of CRDs in place by March 2009	On track 12 (of 17) CRDs in place as of April 2009.

QUALITY OF SERVICE: FOCUS ON CUSTOMERS AND RESPONSIVE TO CUSTOMER STAFF

Overall Assessment		Amber
	Performance Target	Actual Performance
Delivery of Service	90% of customers satisfied with our service	Since February 2008, we have been hitting 99% or 100% every month. We have, however, not been satisfied with the quality of this data. Drawing on best practice from other organisations, we are developing a more comprehensive system.
	Minimal number of justified complaints	The Consular Balanced Score Card data shows that the number of complaints has averaged between 10 and 20 a month. We have recently improved the definition of a "justified complaint" (previously, the definition was too narrow). We are also improving our overall complaints system.
	99% hospitalised cases contacted within 24 hours of notification	Target achieved. The network as a whole achieved the 10 working day target in 95% since October 2008.
	98% of detainees contacted within 24 hours of notification	Since February 2008, Consular BSC data indicated that overall we have exceeded this target every month. The lowest figure is 99% in April and August 2008.
	98% of notarial acts completed within 1 working day	Target achieved.
	90% of straightforward passports issued within 10 working days	Target achieved.
	98% of correspondence responded to within 20 working days	Target achieved.
	98% of Travel Advice notices reviewed and revised every 3 months	Target achieved.
	98% of correctly submitted Service of Process documents processed within 5 working days	Target achieved.

		Performance Target	Actual Performance
Delivery of Service	Registration of Births & Deaths processed within 5 and 3 days respectively		Some posts are not achieving this target. We are working with these posts to improve service.
Delivery of Capability	Framework for Best Practice in conducting Authentication by Interview (ABI) passport interviews introduced to all posts by Dec 08 and full implementation of procedures by March 09		Completed on time.
	Design, development and testing of new system (BRIDGE) to replace BRIT, with capability to issue new Emergency Travel Document (ETD) by July 09. Rollout to posts by August 09. Capability to issue full validity passports by late 2010		Delivery schedule remains on track (testing of phase 1 of new system began in March 2009).
	Effective Legalisation Offices established in Milton Keynes and central London able to cope with the 15% annual increase in demand for services by June 2008, with on-going consultation to improve quality of service to members of the public and corporate business		Satellite office in central London opened as scheduled on 1 April 2008 and has been fully effective. Milton Keynes office opened in August 2008. Meet in-person and 24-hour business target. Unable to meet postal applications target.

CONSISTENT SERVICE DELIVERY: COMPLAINT WITH INTERNAL PROCEDURES AND EFFICIENT WORKING.

Overall Assessment Amber

	Performance Target	Actual Performance
Delivery of Service	Minimal number of lifestyle enquiries handled ¹	The Consular BSC data shows a dramatic decrease in the number of lifestyle enquiries being recorded by posts – from 2678 to 151 in March 2009. Clear guidance and support has led to this decrease.
	100% of new cases entered on Compass	Target not fully achieved across the network. Performance steadily improved, and working with posts to find solutions to obstacles stopping the use of Compass. Training, messaging and encouragement key.
	70% of Post Emergency Plans (PEP) reviewed and updated in the last year	Target achieved. 173 of 203 (85%) PEP are in date, and nearly all posts have completed a review in the last 12 months.
	70% of PEPs exercised in the last year	Target achieved. As of March 2009, 82% of posts have recorded that they have exercised their PEP in the last year.
	70% posts Consular Crisis Plans reviewed and updated according to risk level frequency	Target has not been achieved. Only 53% of Consular Crisis Plans have been reviewed and updated. Work to be done specifically on low risk posts.
Delivery of Capability	Phase 1 of rollout of new 24/7 call centre delivered by March 2009. Centre fully functional by 2011	The Global Response Centre successfully launched on 1 April 2009. Project remains on track.
	Introduction of Identity and Passport Service (IPS) fraud identification practices in the overseas network. Mechanisms in place to transfer to IPS, FCO knowledge and experience in fraud detection in relation to overseas applications. Both by December 2008	A specific Fraud Strategy based on the IPS model has been circulated to all posts to ensure a consistent approach to identifying fraud. IPS seconded staff have built up extensive knowledge – feeding this back to IPS. Dedicated fraud officer recruited to deal with South Asia specifically.
	Risk based tools delivered for sporting events and contingency planning by December 2008	Risk based tools for sports event planning and contingency planning embedded in 2008.

1 : Lifestyle Enquiries Definition: Many posts receive requests for help with the practicalities of living in another country - property, pensions, schools, or resolving local disputes for example. The Consular Guide makes it clear that we do not answer such queries substantively, and should be confined to giving the customer contact details for organisations that can help (e.g. relocation agencies, British associations, local lawyers).

EFFICIENT WORKING: MAXIMISE FEE INCOME, RELIABLE SYSTEMS AND EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES.

Overall Assessment Amber

	Performance Target	Actual Performance
Delivery of Service	95% of chargeable fees collected	Target Achieved.
	Minimal number of incidences where IT systems are unavailable for more than one hour, baseline to be established by end of March 2009	Little progress against objective to establish baseline as it was agreed that there are too many unknown factors that would need to be taken into consideration.
	Know Before You Go campaign received more than 6:1 return on investment	Target achieved. The Know Before You Go campaign had its best year ever in terms of ROI – achieving 24:1 for Public Relations and 8.5:1 for partnership marketing.
	Embed new Management Information (MI) capabilities leading to 100% return rate by May 2008 so they are used fully and consistently by all staff leading to reliable MI that managers are using to make decisions on their resources	Management Information return rates are amber as we did not achieve a 100% return rate (figures are between 90-95%). Persistent offenders have been identified and chased up. The addition of metrics to monitor submissions should improve the score for the next year.
Delivery of Capability	Rationalisation of passport issuing network, in line with IPS Phased Tactical Releases by April 2009. Repatriation of production process to UK and other consequences of IPS/FCO integration process	On target. North America passport production centre created in Washington in November 2008. Same for Western Europe. FCO/IPS Integration Memorandum of Understanding signed in April 2009.
	Introduction for 2009-10 greater clarity into our financial management through better financial MI and clearer separation of our accounts from the FCO main account. Management Trading Account (MTA) to balance	Consular fees review in second half of FY 08/09 reviewed the MTA results and the hard efficiencies needed. A projected MTA which broke-even over two years was agreed based on Passport Rationalisation and Legalisations savings. We also agreed price increases for Passports of 4.25%, Legalisation 2.75% and for overseas fees by 6%.

Delivery of Service Matrix by region March 2009

		Australasia and South Pacific	Caribbean	Central America	Central and Eastern Europe	East Africa	Far East and Central Asia	Greece, Cyprus, Albania, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo	Gulf Region	Iberia	North Africa and Near East	North America	Northern Europe	South America	South Asia	South East Asia	Southern Africa	Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan	West Africa	Western Europe
Quality of Service	90% Customer satisfaction	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	97%	100%	100%	100%
	Number of Justified Complaints	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
	99% Hospitalisation Cases contacted within 24 hours	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	98% of Detainees contacted within 24 hours	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%	88%	100%	75%	99%	100%	100%	90%	100%	100%	100%		100%
	98% of Notarial Acts completed within 1 working day		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	90% of Straightforward Passports issued within 10 working days	97%	92%	111%	98%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	107%		81%	99%	98%	102%	70%	99%	100%	97%
	98% of Correspondence responded to within 20 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%	100%
Consistent Service Delivery	100% of New Cases entered on Compass	100%	100%	98%	98%	100%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	70% of Post Emergency Plans exercised in the last year	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92%	100%	100%	82%	100%	100%	100%	100%	93%
	70% of Post Emergency Plans updated in the last year	100%	100%	71%	86%	71%	75%	86%	91%	82%	90%	69%	100%	88%	82%	80%	56%	92%	50%	73%
	70% of Consular Crisis Plans reviewed and updated	100%	80%	82%	100%	88%	90%	100%	91%		89%	100%	100%	100%	82%	67%	100%	86%	50%	50%
Professionalism of Staff	100% Staff trained within last 4 years	82%	89%	100%	89%	86%	82%	94%	91%	92%	88%	78%	89%	96%	92%	96%	71%	92%	70%	84%
	100% Consular Duty Officers trained within last 4 years	77%	98%	98%	92%	93%	82%	97%	75%	98%	75%	95%	78%	98%	90%	93%	77%	87%	59%	97%
	100% Honorary Consuls trained within last 4 years	100%	100%	94%	91%	50%	75%	80%	0%	100%	91%	58%	68%	73%	100%	78%	89%	71%	67%	81%
	100% Heads of Post attended Crisis Leadership Courses	89%	100%	100%	100%	86%	83%	86%	91%	100%	100%	62%	83%	100%	82%	90%	67%	92%	100%	80%
	100% Staff have Learning & Developmet plans	100%	100%	87%	96%	100%	94%	100%	78%	93%	88%	98%	100%	96%	97%	100%	87%	88%	70%	99%
	100% Staff had an appraisal in the last year	100%	97%	94%	96%	100%	93%	100%	87%	92%	100%	83%	90%	100%	96%	100%	97%	96%	85%	93%
Efficient Working	95% of Chargable Fees collected	100%	100%	94%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	99%	54%	100%	99%	98%	100%
	Average number of times IT systems are unavailable for more than 1 hr	0.44	0.56	0.73	0.00	0.63	0.25	0.40	0.55	0.43	1.40	0.69	0.75	0.33	1.27	0.33	2.30	0.53	0.50	0.73

CONSULAR SUPPORT

WHAT KIND OF HELP CAN WE PROVIDE?

We can:

- issue replacement passports
- provide information about transferring funds
- provide appropriate help if you have suffered rape or serious assault, are a victim of other crime, are ill or in hospital
- provide details of local lawyers, interpreters, doctors and funeral directors (see note 1 below)
- do all we properly can to contact you within 24 hours of being told that you have been detained
- offer support and help in a range of other cases, such as child abductions, death of relatives overseas, missing people and kidnapping
- contact friends and family for you, if you want
- make special arrangements in cases of terrorism, civil disturbances or natural disasters.

We cannot:

- get involved in private disputes over property, employment, commercial or other matters
- get you out of prison, prevent the local authorities from deporting you after your prison sentence, or interfere in criminal or civil court proceedings
- help you enter a country, for example, if you do not have a visa or your passport is not valid, as we cannot interfere in another country's immigration policy or procedures
- give you legal advice, investigate crimes or carry out searches for missing people, although we can give you details of people who may be able to help you in these cases, such as English-speaking lawyers
- get you better treatment in hospital than is given to local people
- get you better treatment in prison than local prisoners, although we may raise concerns with local authorities if treatment falls below internationally recognised standards
- pay any bills or give you money from public funds
- make travel arrangements for you, or find you work or accommodation
- make business arrangements on your behalf
- make sure you will be safe in another country - safety and security are matters for the government concerned
- provide compensation if you are affected by a major catastrophe or terrorist attack.

For full details of our Consular Service please see the Consular guide at the following address
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/2855621/english>

Note 1:

Neither the Government nor the relevant British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate can make any guarantee in relation to the professional ability or character of any person or company on the list, nor can they be held responsible in any way for you relying on any advice you are given. We welcome feedback on the people and companies listed.



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